

Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention Grants Programme

October 2020 update

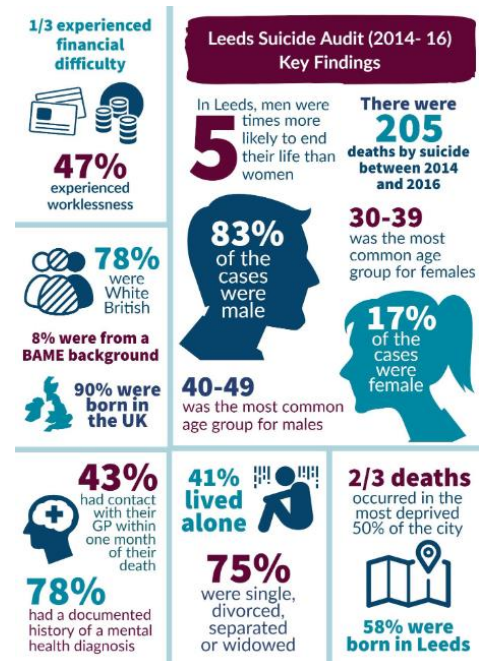
Introduction

Suicide Prevention is a key public mental health priority in Leeds. The [Leeds Suicide Audit \(2014-16\)](#), nationally recognised as best practice, has highlighted that men in Leeds are almost five times more likely to end their own life than women, which is higher than the national average.

Public Health, Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation have worked in partnership to set up the Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention programme that funds Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) in order to, for the first time, work directly with men who are the highest at-risk group for suicides in Leeds. The Grants programme is funded to deliver work prioritised in the citywide [Suicide Prevention Action Plan](#) and recurrent funding for men at risk of suicide was prioritised by Councillor Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council.

An annual, three-year grants programme of £71,700 was set up to provide funding for voluntary and community organisations in order to support social activities for men which are shaped and determined by local men themselves, and to provide outreach work with targeted communities in order to reduce social isolation. The programme is managed by Leeds Community Foundation, a local grant-maker with over 15 years of expertise and the largest independent grant-maker in Yorkshire. To date it has distributed £46m in grants to Third Sector Organisations of all sizes across Leeds and Bradford through local, regional and national programmes. Leeds Community Foundation's annual management fee for this programme is £8,300.

As of October 2020, three rounds of grants have been delivered (autumn 2018, spring 2019 and spring 2020) resulting in 11 Third sector Organisations being awarded a total of £210,299 to deliver 15 projects supporting men across Leeds. A Leeds City Council/Leeds Community Foundation co-written press release about the funding and its background was sent out by Leeds City Council in July 2019 and the grants programme was highlighted on World Suicide Prevention Day both in 2018 and 2019.



Headlines

£210,299

Distributed in grants to date

15

Projects supporting men
across Leeds

11

Third Sector Organisations funded

991

Men directly benefitting to date

48

Men's wellbeing ambassadors
recruited in cafes, businesses and
organisations across Leeds.

1281

People viewed live theatre performances
bringing mental health, suicide and
bereavement into the open.

"I don't know where I'd be without this group - probably no longer here. It was a step forward for me to know that other people have gone through what I have gone through and it's not my fault. I hope that one day I can get a job - something I want to do. I don't know what that is yet but I'm working on it. I know I have someone to talk to and that really helps when I have a day when things are not going so well" - Male participant

"It's been one of the most challenging, fascinating and rewarding pieces of work we've done so far" - Grantee

Overview of Grants Process

The Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention Programme was launched on World Suicide Prevention Day - 10th September 2018 at the St George's centre in Leeds. There was good engagement from Third Sector Organisations (36 registered). Speakers included Tom Riordan, Cllr Charlwood, representatives from the Orion Partnership including a man with lived experience, Catherine Ward from Leeds City Council, and the Programmes Director and Head of Grants from Leeds Community Foundation.

- **Application process:** In all 3 rounds, the grants programme application criteria built on evidence from the most current Leeds Audit as outlined in Table 1. As an example, the criteria for Round 3 – Large Grants is included in Appendix 1.

In all rounds, applications were invited for:

- i. Large grants of between £10,000 and £25,000 for projects over a 12-24 month period.
- ii. Small grants up to £10,000 for 12 months activity to fund pilot projects, support smaller groups, help with capacity building, small scale research and market testing.

An additional Expression of Interest step was included in Round 1 in anticipation of high levels of potential applications from organisations looking to apply for a large grant. Following review and feedback from staff at Leeds City Council/Public Health England, and Leeds Community Foundation (face to face and by email), 5 organisations were invited to submit a full application. The Expression of Interest stage was removed in subsequent rounds as awareness of the programme had increased, high quality applications were being received and it enabled a shorter application to award timeline. All applications were assessed by Leeds Community Foundation staff against eligibility and programme-specific criteria and due diligence performed on the applicants.

- **Panels:** The panels in round 1 and 2 included representatives from Leeds City Council/Public Health England, Leeds Community Foundation and a Third Sector Organisation. In Round 3, which took place during the Covid-19 lockdown, the panel met online and included representatives Leeds City Council/Public Health England, Leeds Community Foundation and from Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.
- **Grant payments and reporting:** Large grants received 50% of the amount awarded up front with the remainder being released on receipt of an interim report at the mid-way point and evidence of satisfactory progress being made. For small grants of below £10,000, the full amount was released at award with a final report required at the end of the project. Report templates were agreed with Leeds City Council/Public Health staff and all completed reports are shared with them.
- **Project visits:** Staff from Leeds City Council/Public Health England, and Leeds Community Foundation visited the following projects in 2019-20 to see delivery and engagement in action and meet some of the men benefitting from the projects: Barca Leeds; New Wortley Community Association; Feel Good Factor; Humans Being; Red Ladder Theatre Company. Other visits scheduled during lockdown had to be cancelled.

- **Awareness raising and shared learning:** The upcoming Round 3 was highlighted at the Leeds Suicide Audit 2014-16 workshop on World Suicide Prevention day 10 September 2019. The majority of Round 1 and 2 grantees submitted literature highlighting their projects which was displayed on a stall, with some included in the delegate packs. As part of this, Damian Dawtry from Feel Good Factor spoke about their Manbassadors programme and what had been achieved and learned to date.

A Learning event was held in February 2020 in central Leeds with project workers from all 9 Community Organisations funded in Rounds 1 and 2, as well as some project participants, to share their learning, expertise and good practice around supporting men who experience social isolation and loneliness. The outcomes are captured in the [‘Men’s Suicide Prevention Grants: Handbook for working with men in Leeds’](#).

Table 1. Overview of Leeds Men Suicide Prevention Grants rounds

Grant programme round	Round 1 Autumn 2018	Round 2 Spring 2019	Round 3 Spring 2020	Total across the 3 rounds
Priority geographical areas ¹	LS13, LS12, LS11, LS10, LS9, LS18 ²	LS13, LS12, LS11, LS10, LS9 ²	LS6, LS8, LS9, LS11, LS12, LS15, LS28³ LS13, LS14, LS16, LS17, LS19, LS25, LS27	-
Target beneficiaries ¹	White men	White men	Men from all ethnicities	-
Number of applications received (Total requested)	16 (£216,915)	9 (£82,226)	26 (£209,316)	51
Panel date	26 November 2018	29 April 2019	8 April 2020	
Number of large grants awarded (£10,000-£25,000)	3	1	2	6
Number of small grants awarded (up to £10,000)	(1) ⁴	5	4	9
Total awarded	£62,576	£71,339	£76,384	£210,299

¹ In rounds 1 and 2, geographical areas with the highest levels of men suicides were prioritised based on evidence from the Leeds Audit 2011-13; in round 3, they were based on the Leeds Audit 2014-16

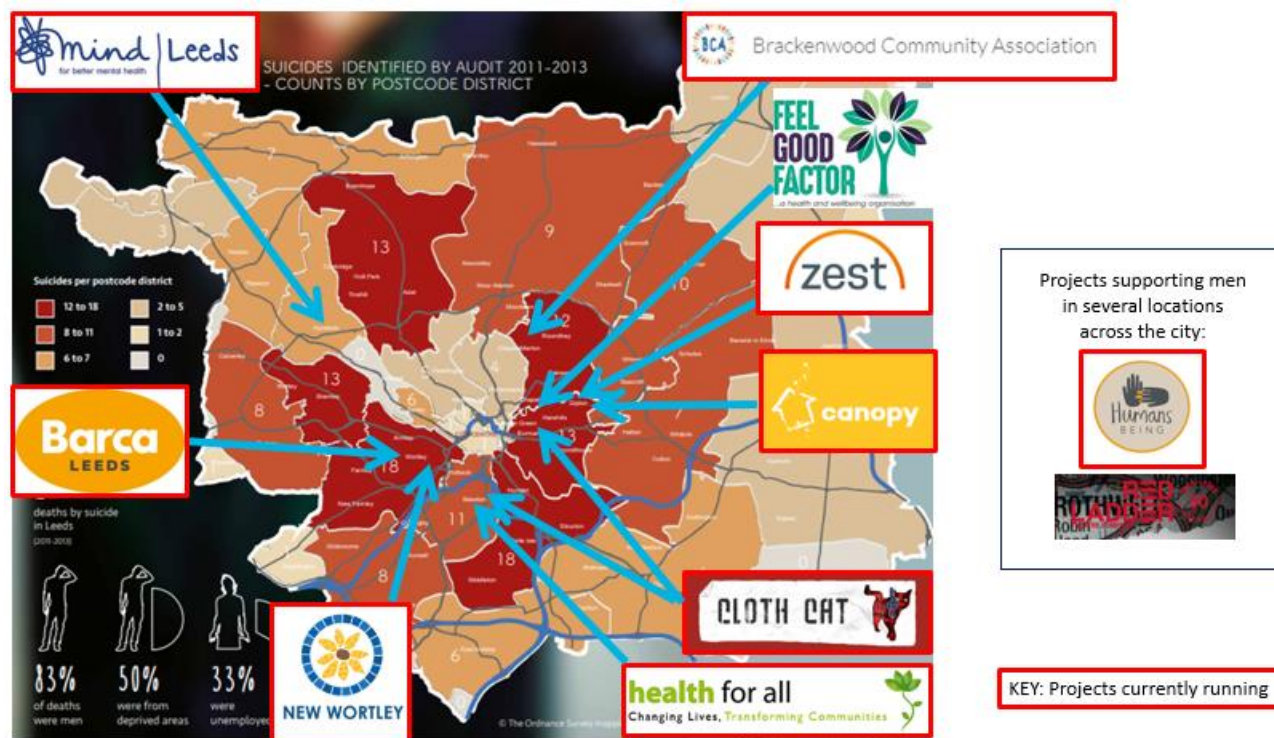
² LS18 was also included following data from real time surveillance in Round 1 but removed in Round 2 as a large grant with Leeds Mind (Round 1) was already covering this area

³ The postcodes highlighted in bold were the high priority areas in light of the Leeds Audit 2014-16 findings

⁴ TCV Hollybush Conservation Centre was awarded £9,124 by the Round 1 panel for their proposed 12 month ‘A Free Man on Sunday’ project operating from the city centre. TCV Hollybush was subsequently unable to deliver the project as planned due to unforeseen changes in the organisation’s structure and priorities and the grant was returned in 2019. This amount is not included in the total awarded for Round 1.

Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention Grants Awarded

The following map shows the wide distribution of men's outreach and support work being delivered across the city, covering many of the areas highlighted in both recent Leeds Suicide Audits and also areas of deprivation. As indicated, some projects have delivered in several locations across the city. The projects highlighted in red are those which have not yet completed (as of October 2020).



Organisations Funded and Projects at a glance

Organisation funded	Amount awarded	Project overview
Round 1		
Feel Good Factor	£24,879	Recruiting a network of men's health advocates 'Manbassadors' in LS9
Leeds Mind	£24,988	Men'd - Programme of outreach and support for men in LS18
Barca Leeds	£12,709	Community activity development for men in LS12 and LS13
Round 2		
Health for All	£24,900	Outreach and Menspace/Skills Hub programme in LS11
New Wortley Community Association	£8,070	Weekly walking group in LS12

Red Ladder Theatre Company	£10,000	'The Parting Glass' live theatre project across Leeds venues
Cloth Cat Studios Limited	£8,510	'Man About Town' creative group activities around music and digital arts in LS11
Humans Being	£9,991	Training community cafe volunteers as 'men wellbeing ambassadors'
Zest Health for Life	£9,868	IMPACT programme extended for isolated men to socialise and learn additional skills in LS9
Round 3		
Barca Leeds	£20,515	Further developing Round 1 West Leeds Men's network-group activities, connections to the wider community, friendship and support, mainly in LS12
Cloth Cat Studios Limited	£17,528	Further developing Round 1 'Man About Town' - creative group activities around music and digital arts in LS11
Humans Being	£10,000	Survive and Thrive – developing skills, knowledge and confidence of foodbank staff/volunteers to act as men's wellbeing ambassadors, mainly in LS8
Zest Health for Life	£8,591	Further developing Round 1 IMPACT group so men can plan, deliver and peer support other men within the Orion Wellman offer in LS9
Brackenwood Community Association	£10,000	Room with a Cue - space and activities for men to help build friendship and a community spirit in LS8
The Canopy Housing Project	£9,750	Rehabilitative, practical community project with skills training, mentoring, confidence building and help towards employment after illness or life events in LS9

Individual Project Updates - Completed Projects

1. Feel Good Factor - £24,879 awarded in Round 1 Project delivered January to December 2019



[Feel Good Factor](#) (FGF), part of the Orion Partnership, has recruited a network of men's health advocates, "**Manbassadors**", working within businesses and organisations within **LS9** to share health messages with men and signpost them to support and activities. The project aimed to increase community engagement of local men and reduce isolation, improve men's health and wellbeing long-term and raise awareness around suicide prevention risk factors among the local business and wider community, as well as improve community cohesion.

31 Manbassadors were recruited over the 12 months in places such as fish and chip shops, chemists, gyms, convenience stores, a social club and a computer games shop. Most are from small businesses that are integral to the interconnections of the locality. As anticipated, many of the Manbassadors who responded

felt a personal connection to suicide. For example, when visited by Feel Good Factor staff, one Manbassador reported how the brother of a regular customer had taken his own life just a few days earlier.

Quotes from Manbassadors:

"Some of my customers have recently lost wives. This will be great for them."

"This is the right area for this. We've got loads of men who can benefit from this. Men that are secluded and come in here and buy cigs every day."

"Some guys who come in here could really do with this."

"I've had a lot of conversations. Loads"

(Looking at the Activities Leaflet): "Oh, that's very close!"

Feel Good Factor's success in recruiting Manbassadors stems from one of their volunteers and service users, a successful events entrepreneur, who helped refine the approach, promote the brand and develop a "sales" technique. This was an invaluable asset to the team and was a major factor in recruiting 12 Manbassadors within the first month of recruitment.

Feel Good Factor supported Manbassadors to develop their bite sized interventions and co-design an LS9 activities leaflet which they could display and use when working with clients. Men from the Orion's men groups were also consulted to ensure its relevance and suitability and the resulting leaflet (see below) contained a wide range of information, from debt and drug advice to cricket clubs and cafes and also some of the information found in the PH Crisis cards. 4 businesses provided vouchers giving discounts and 5 vouchers in the leaflet were known to have been exchanged by December 2019. By the end of the year, 21 Manbassadors were still active and 10 had lapsed.

Over the 12 months, Manbassadors held **208 conversations with men** who showed signs of isolation and who were given a leaflet as a means of signposting them to further support and activities.

"We found that the businesses in LS9 already have good connections with vulnerable men. Much of our job was simply to support those existing relationships, by providing Manbassadors with information about local services, men's groups, health and wellbeing activities, etc. By empowering and informing the businesses, we were also encouraging them to look out for, and consider the needs of, potentially vulnerable and isolated men, whom they may not have previously considered." Feel Good Factor

Feel Good Factor gained significant learning through this pilot project with both successes and challenges. The YEP, BBC Radio Leeds and Radio Aire all ran articles on the project, which greatly boosted Feel Good Factor's presence as an innovative and effective men's health organisation. The project featured in a Channel 5 documentary with Ricky Tomlinson and Ralph Little early spring 2020.

The project has since secured further 12 months' funding through the Leeds Community Foundation Leeds Fund Strategic Grants to build on the Manbassador model and pilot rolling it out into LS8 in 2020.

Meet one of the Manbassadors



Amy Driffield, from Shaftesbury Fish and Chips, is one of those shopkeepers who you can tell is more than just a businesswoman. No visit to her chip shop will pass without her saying a warm hello to a customer coming in for his weekly pie and peas, or shouting a greeting across the road to another resident walking past. She is an ideal candidate to be a Manbassador and, as with all the Manbassadors, this project is not about instilling the values of community involvement into local

businesses. Those values are quite clearly already there, and our job is to facilitate that day-to-day support to make it more informed and supported in itself.

"It is an easy step for us", says Amy. "We already have the relationship with customers so it's easy for us to spot the signs if perhaps there is something going on in their lives that they don't really want to talk about." Typically, she comes across many men who are "lonely, or they have lost somebody, or they are just bored and need something to do."

On 30 occasions in her six months as a Manbassador, Amy has signposted men to an activity or service that could help them, and given out 53 Activity Leaflets. These leaflets detail local services and activities that may be of help to men who are in danger of slipping into depression or further into isolation.



2. Health for All - £24,900 awarded in Round 2 Project delivered June 2019 to May 2020

health for all
Changing Lives, Transforming Communities



Through its strong links within the local LS11 community (Beeston, Holbeck, Belle Isle & Middleton) and through working with housing, police, fire and mental health day services, transitional housing units, social prescribers, and projects like Andy's Man club & MINT, Health for All reached out to adult men who are at

risk of suicide or who have such thoughts caused by depression or other mental health issues. It engaged them in a wide range of activities in safe, open and inclusive spaces. Activities suited a broad range of interests including walking, I.T., camera classes, football, woodwork, cooking and an out of hours Saturday allotment. Alongside, men could speak openly and freely to each other without judgement or negative feedback in a peer support group which was modelled on the Andy Man's club facilitation style. The aim of the activities was to enhance and improve their spiritual, mental and physical wellbeing with the hope of improving their state of mind, leading to a more positive outlook and hope for the future.

28 men from LS10 and LS11 have been supported through this project in a holistic, person-centred and sustained way including through Covid and the lockdown. Many men started to meet and support each other outside of the project and went on to join other activities. The peer support group also became like a steering group, helping to reflect on what was working or could be improved on in light of the men's unmet needs.

Outcome stars done with 8 men showed improvements at 3 months but this evaluation approach proved unpopular as the men saw this as intrusive and medicalised. Evidence and insight was therefore gathered through conversations with the men and the detailed confidential case studies provided show the complex circumstances and the ebbs and flows of good and bad days for men involved in the project.

Health for All reported *"we cannot say if we have saved lives BUT participants have told us we have been 'lifesavers' and that is in itself a positive reflection for the project. We have continued to see a rise in confidence and social inclusion and interaction."*

"Seeing them change from having no faith in themselves, to doing something that they could not do initially, gave a sense of achievement, and that sense of achievement gave them hope; it didn't take away their issues but we feel it was an incredibly powerful inner resource for them to move forward. Even when what you hope for doesn't happen, we have learned that you look for hope in other things; hope is what keeps us from the edge."

During the last few months of the project in Covid-19, the outreach worker maintained contact and support online, including online gardening and social sessions, and via social media and also phone calls.

Reflections on how men have coped during the Covid-phase of the project: *"Some have coped very well, with quite a few saying 'at least everyone knows how I feel on a regular basis'. For others It has been very difficult during lockdown, many feel they have been left behind, and some say they have been forgotten about in terms of society. We have kept in touch through online (where available) and certainly on phone calls. There is no doubt though that many are fed up and have taken steps backwards. Social isolation is a big factor in mental health and temporarily losing the contacts that they had has not been easy for them."*

3. Red Ladder Theatre Company - £10,000 awarded in Round 2 Project delivered June 2019 to June 2020



This project used live theatre performed in non-theatre venues to create a space for people, in particular vulnerable and isolated men, to come together and bring the subject of mental health and suicide into the open. 'The Parting Glass' was written by young working class Leeds-based playwright Chris O'Connor

following a period of depression – [interview with Chris](#). It is a short 35 min play that addresses the issue of male depression and suicide in a more direct way for ‘at risk’ audiences and involves a second character, Jim’s girlfriend, to examine the impact of suicide on those left behind. All Red Ladder staff and actors accessed SAFETALK training. Where possible, the play was followed by an after-show Q&A session facilitated by a male registered Mental Health Nurse and information leaflets were distributed.

1,281 people saw the ‘The Parting Glass’ performance across **11 different community and alternative non-theatre venues in Leeds** such as The Gipton Fire Station, Hunslet RLFC, Inkwel Arts, Hawksworth Wood Village Hall and TCV Hollybush as well as in 3 secondary schools. 21% of people saw the show at a community centre (all were situated in ‘working class’ areas) and 22% saw it at a Working Men’s Club or Sports Club (typically more ‘macho’ environments). 5 Performances were also delivered beyond Leeds through additional separate funding secured by Red Ladder Theatre Company. 49% of audience members were male, 2% non-binary, 49% female.

The project was externally evaluated and both quantitative and qualitative evidence showed:

- greater awareness of men’s mental health raised
- reduced stigma surrounding men’s mental health in male-centric settings
- the project enabled men from working class communities to feel comfortable talking about mental health
- audiences were given a greater understanding of the indicators of depression.

Examples of audience feedback:

“It really made me think about how to treat people.”

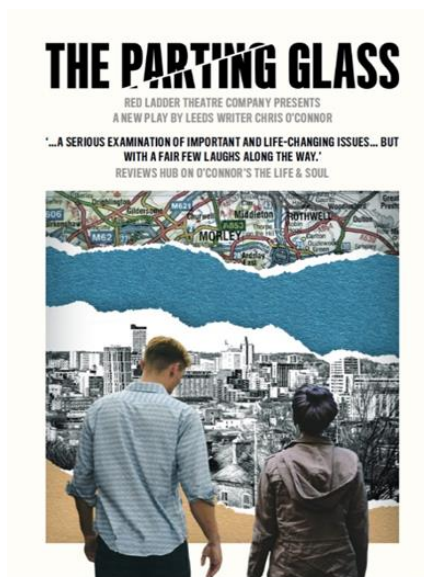
“Makes you think - are we all doing enough?”

“Thought provoking, honest and raw. A very accurate account. As a mental health nurse myself I see the devastation, and ripple effect of suicide. It's okay to talk. Brilliant.”

“Was just amazing. Overwhelming, powerful and emotional. The story telling, script writing, acting and attention to post performance support for the audience was just outstanding. So glad I came to see such amazing story-telling & outstanding performances followed by a panel which led the way on prevention and encouraging support” Dr Sara Munro

[Post show,] *“an audience member explained that they had attempted to take their own life, having suffered PTSD. They thanked us for the production, and the space it gave afterwards for them to be able to speak openly about their experience, and to say out loud that they are on the mend. They felt this opportunity had contributed to their recovery process.”*

A legacy film trailer has been produced which captures the key elements of the performance and audience reactions. A number of organisations have expressed their interest in continuing the conversation about finding a future life for the show in a variety of health and wellbeing contexts.



4. Humans Being - £9,991 awarded in Round 2 Project delivered May 2019 to June 2020

[Humans Being](#) delivered two 'Café Connections' courses across 11 sessions at the ToastLoveCoffee and New Wortley Community Centre cafes. Integrating common models such as 5Ways, SafeTALK and Better Conversations, **17 volunteers** were trained as men's wellbeing ambassadors in suicide prevention skills and supported them to develop strategies for helping at-risk men build resilience, whilst also being aware of and managing their own mental wellbeing as volunteers.



Feedback from volunteers showed increased confidence in talking with and listening to men in social situations and about suicide if this arose, signposting rather than offering solutions:

"I feel more confident at asking direct questions to find out if someone is feeling suicidal. I know more about what services are out there to help."

"It's made a massive difference as I am able to identify risk and opportunities in different situations."

"Used CLANG to help me slow down and recognise what's going on around me. Appreciating things more."

The two case studies provided illustrated how volunteers had put their learning into practice, initiating and building on conversations with men.

In light of lockdown and the closure of cafes, the project's focus and resources were diverted to supporting men more directly in these challenging times. An online weekly men's group called Long Distance Social Club was held with **15 men** taking part in sessions structured around sharing feelings and experiences and discussing issues which they chose such as 'zones of control,' 'ageing,' 'what I like about being a man,' 'social online games,' and 'uncertainty'. A short online 'Brain, Braw and a Load of Bo****cks' course exploring

masculinity and mental health was also delivered via Zoom which rapidly 'sold out' and benefitted a further **12 men**.

The extensive feedback collated (examples below) and the more detailed case study of a man supported through the Long Distance Social Club illustrated the benefits for men of the safe online space, supportive connections and openness created.

"We challenged the very narrow images of what a successful man looks like. I'm not one to attend groups usually but I've enjoyed meeting the men, the openness, the safe space. "

"I don't have too many friends because I've had too much trauma in my life. Making new friends on this Zoom puts me on an upwards route rather than going downhill. It's just good to talk, people are listening to what I'm saying, it does make me feel better, a lot better. "

"Even though we just see each other on the computer, I feel like we're friends. I don't feel an outsider anymore."

"When I first started coming on here [LDSC] I was on a real downer, contemplating some silly stuff that I was going to do, and I've sort of gone up a little bit from that now. Well, quite a lot and I think that's thanks to you guys really, just for listening and things like that. 'Cause I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't gone to this meeting. "



CAFE CONNECTIONS

ENGAGING, LISTENING,
SIGNPOSTING AND SUPPORTING
MEN IN COMMUNITY CAFES

A five week course for staff and volunteers

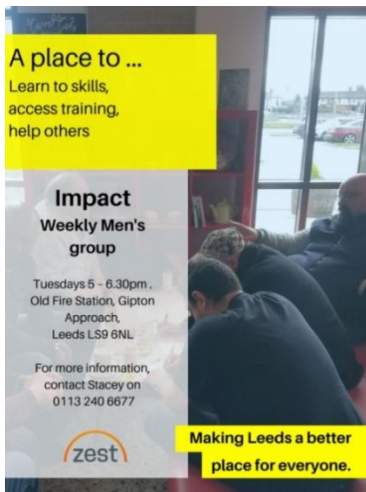
The online phase of this project showed that there is *"a strong appetite amongst at-risk men, volunteers and health professionals to explore and challenge gender stereotypes in relation to mental health. This is seen as key to improving both community and personal wellbeing."* While Zoom was an effective platform, barriers such as lack of ICT equipment and skills or men starting to experience mental ill-health during the pandemic need to be considered.



5. Zest Health for Life - £9,868 awarded in Round 2 Project delivered June 2019 to June 2020



Zest Health For Life have further developed their IMPACT group for men who are already attending a men's group to develop their skills set so they can plan, deliver and peer support other men within the Orion Wellman offer in East North East Leeds. **15 IMPACT men**, including a core group of 6 men, have benefitted from this funding and reached **a further 150 men** through the activities delivered, offers of support and conversations.



The IMPACT men ran stalls at events such as The Northern Man Festival, a canal relay, World Mental Hay Day activities and local smaller events and galas and championed the work of Orion, specifically the men's groups in Inner Leeds. 'Talking Heads' was one of the stall activities led by men at the Northern Man Festival which focused on mental health and where 30 men wrote down on a paper version of a head things they were thinking, worrying about and sharing/releasing those things without having to have a difficult conversation. Senior staff and specialist workers were on hand to support in any emerging discussions.

They also accessed training including Dementia Awareness, basic First Aid and digital inclusion; visited Northern College twice (including leadership and management skills training); took part in Humans Being's course (also a grantee in this Men's Suicide Prevention programme) looking at assertiveness, facilitation skills, overcoming barriers and managing stress. There have also been opportunities for men to socialise and get to know one another in different ways (e.g. Junkyard mini golf) and they led on a consultation with 35 Orion group men to co-produce a timetable of trips and visits (pre lockdown).

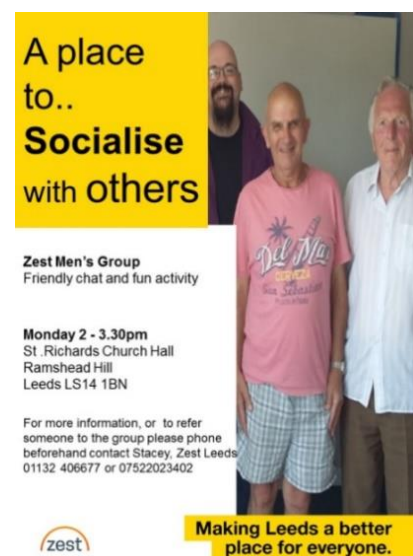
The original intention was for IMPACT men to take ownership of some men's groups, however they did not feel in a position to do so yet. A group support worker was recruited from among the men's groups (3 men applied) and he has been key in supporting men to take on responsibility with running activities during men's groups and being the main contact for men during Covid lockdown. A tablet lending scheme and additional support was set up to overcome digital exclusion during Covid - "a third of people have been lost to Zest, because they don't have the technology, or they don't know how to use it".

Feedback from IMPACT men:

"Before I came to Impact I had not very many friends to speak of, no one I spoke to regularly and no one I could reach out to in my local area. I was nervous and anxious. Impact provided me with some friends from all walks of life, and I've learned from them. I have also increased my confidence and trust in myself.

[...] Impact has given me a sense of belief I didn't have before, trust in myself, and also to stand up for myself. It has given me the ability to question and ask why, if I feel something is wrong. In truth, It has given me things words alone can never express, but it has changed me, made me more mature. I hope I have conveyed a tiny droplet of what Impact has done to me in this message because in truth, words on a page just can't do it justice. "

"I have not only benefited from our various courses and seminars with regard to helping others, I feel I have also benefited personally in that I am once again comfortable being out in the world and meeting people. This was a sadly missed part of my life and more than anything I think the Impact group has had a massive input in getting me back there."



Feedback from Zest:

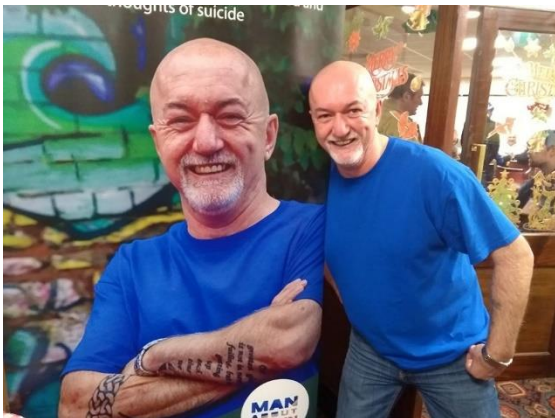
"The men [s...] willingness to try, learn new and sometimes difficult things have been done together, for some it's returning to learning or doing it with limited reading and writing ability but watching them support each other is also testament to everything this group is about. Our group is the first of its kind [...] we now know men will engage if given the safe and environment to do so and that peer support, engagement outside of health services is a great way to make those initial connections. [...] The continuation of this group has and will continue to improve men's mental health and quality of life as they now have more opportunities to make friends, learn skills, help others and give back."

This project has been funded for a further 12 months through Round 3.

6. Cloth Cat Studios Limited - £8,510 awarded in Round 2 Project delivered June 2019 to June 2020



Through their new [‘Man about Town’](#) men's wellbeing project, Cloth Cat studios provided creative, collaborative and social activities for men mainly in their 40s and 50s, including carers, people with learning difficulties and/or mental health issues, to tackle isolation, desperation and thoughts of hopelessness.



50 men from LS9, LS10, LS11, LS12 and LS13 engaged with a series of creative workshops using music (writing, playing) - *"if it wasn't for music, I don't think that I would still be here"* - film making and Virtual Reality sessions around problem solving, physical activity and wellbeing apps – [it helps with] *"taking my mind off things", "it breaks my isolation from the 4 walls"*.

During lockdown, they moved online, creating music as a group and writing a short film script and, as the rules around lockdown were relaxed, met up weekly for socially distanced nature walks or vinyl picnics in Leeds parks, playing records on a battery-operated turntable or bringing instruments to 'jam' outside. Their project was featured in an [article](#) in the West Leeds Dispatch.

The project explored and built on the men's interests and wide range of creative skills, giving them new experiences and opportunities to find common ground with each other and build friendships – for some this was the only friendships in their current personal lives. Cloth Cat Studios were able to support connection and dialogue with individuals and as a group during lockdown (including dropping off musical instruments, lending out laptops, using music production software remotely and a virtual weekly open mic night); again, for some, this was the only meaningful interaction they had outside of their home during lockdown. Some men reported feeling improved self-worth and that this had impacted positively in relation to their family. Feedback was provided in confidence to support this.

"It's something to look forward to each week"

7. New Wortley Community Association - £8,070 awarded in Round 2 Project Delivered June 2019 to August 2020



NEW WORTLEY

[New Wortley Community Association](#) have provided a weekly Men's Walking Group from their centre for socially isolated men living in New Wortley and the surrounding neighbourhood to come together, make friends, walk and eat together and talk about issues they may be facing, including mental health.

Some of the men have formed new friendships and now meet outside of the group socially and a peer-support group has also now been formed.

52 men have benefitted overall, with around 10 men on average joining the walk each week. From March 2020, due to the lockdown, several men had to self-isolate and the centre had to close so the project was temporarily suspended. The men received a weekly phone call to check on their general welfare and health and wellbeing and were provided with food parcels as needed. Some of them continued to connect with one another for a chat by phone and New Wortley Community Association report that *"feedback suggests the friendships formed over the past year have really been cemented by the common experience of lockdown."*



22 men now access other support services within the centre and 14 men access support services outside of New Wortley Community Association; 8 men have been involved in 'give back projects' in the local community (such as doing someone's garden for them); 6 men attended training to develop their skills further and 3 men have volunteered in the local community.

The funding also enabled New Wortley Community Association volunteers to access training as Mental Health First Aiders, Walking group leaders and Basic first aid training which will help with the sustainability of this project. They also received training through Humans Being's Café Connections course. The walking group continues to run and be volunteer-led.

Meet one of the walkers:

J had suffered from poor mental health and anxiety over a prolonged period of time which ultimately led to him losing his job and suffering severe depression. Over coffee and chats with a support worker, J started to develop the confidence to open up about his issues and his feeling of worthlessness after losing his job. He was introduced to the project lead and encouraged to attend the Men's Walking Group project.

J was very introverted when he first started to attend. He found it difficult to look people in the eye and hold a conversation with them. J was buddied up with another participant who spent time getting to know him and sharing his experiences of also losing his job after working for 24 years at the same company. J started to open up not only about his issues with his mental health but his poor eating habits that regularly

consisted of eating frozen pizza and biscuits. J was supported into attending the community café at New Wortley Community Centre on a regular basis to ensure that he was accessing a more varied diet and he started to really build his confidence talking to people and making new friends

He now has established friendships with other members of the group and he knows that he can pick up the phone whenever he has a “wobble” and talk to the project lead or one of his other friends and he does this regularly.

Individual Project Updates – Projects currently running

1. Leeds Mind - £24,988 awarded in Round 1 June 2019 to November 2020 (Final report due 30.11.20)



‘Men’d’ is a programme of outreach in Horsforth and Inner West Leeds to identify and support men who reside in communities that are at higher risk of suicide and who are least likely to engage with existing support. The project aims to reduce barriers such as stigma and gender stereotyping and work with men to develop opportunities for mutual support and link them in with local activities. The outcomes are to improve social networks, reduce social isolation, improve men’s ability to talk about their feelings and develop coping strategies, support access to help around additional needs (relationships, financial/employment, bereavement, addiction) and co-develop peer networks.



Due to recruitment issues, the project was initially delayed until June 2019. The project was marketed and promoted online, through social media and in and around Horsforth linking in with Housing, local businesses, WorkPlace Leeds, Social Prescribing and GP surgeries, local rugby clubs and the Leeds Trinity and All Saints student wellbeing team. Men’d opened for referrals (including self-referrals) in June 2019 for any man over the age of 18, living, working in or connected to Horsforth and the surrounding area; who may be socially isolated, at risk of or experiencing thoughts of suicide.

By December 2019, 10 referrals were received, 6 initial assessments had been completed and a further 8 one-to-one sessions. Men were supported to access further help in the community including peer support groups. Unexpected staffing issues meant that a new Men’s Suicide Prevention practitioner had to be recruited, with men currently engaged in the project continuing to be supported by other Leeds Mind staff. He started in February 2020, just before Covid-19 and the lockdown which has meant further adaptations to the project have been required to maximise support for men in these challenging times. Referrals have since been increasing and the final report is due in November 2020.

2. Barca Leeds - £12,709* awarded in Round 1

August 2019-November 2020 (Final Report due 13.11.20)

*£12,709 was awarded through the Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention Programme, matched with an additional £18,957 from the Jimbo's Fund¹



Barca Leeds brings previous experience of working in LS12 through their INSIGHT project where they gathered personal experiences and views from local people who had been touched by male suicide. Following initial delays linked to their application for match funding from the Jimbo's Fund and an initial unsuccessful recruitment round, the project started in August 2020. The West Leeds Men's Network (WLMN) includes two weekly men's groups in Bramley and Armley which enable men to meet in a safe space to talk, eat, drink and play games in order to address their individual barriers to participation, access and develop group activities, build social networks and friendships, increase confidence, and, where required, gain individual support from other specialist services.

As expected, the groups grew slowly as awareness was gradually raised, but as of April 2020, **27 men from LS12 and LS13** who are socially isolated and have issues with mental health have engaged with the group meetings, with 6 men on average attending each week. Some have also taken part in three special events (Talkeoke for World Mental Health Day, National Stress Awareness Day and the Parting Glass play) and the first International Men's Day event in West Leeds coordinated by Barca Leeds and working in partnership with various local charities and support agencies.

Following early feedback from Stocks Hill (who encourage their clients to access the groups) that too many existing groups can exclude men because of the groups' specific interest/focus, WLMN has nurtured a general, open social group format where men can suggest discussion topics and activities. For several of the men, the groups are their only significant social contact throughout the week and some members attend both groups. Some of the men have been through difficulties with suicidal ideation, substance misuse issues or eating disorders; 3 referrals have been made for specialised support. Subtle therapeutic exercises have been introduced such as 'Lifelines' and 'Bereavement Letters' which allow for members to open up about their lives and explore and reflect on issues in a supportive, unpressured and non-judgemental way with members of the group themselves providing each other with peer support. Two detailed confidential case studies have been provided showing the personal journeys of two men who have benefitted from the men's groups.

"Coming here – this is the only time I see anyone, have a proper conversation all week at the moment"

"When I first started going I didn't know what to make of it but I really like meeting up with the lads now."

¹ Due to the limited pot size in Round 1 and the large number of quality applications, the panel were unable to fund Barca Leeds for the full amount requested. Following extensive consultation with Leeds Community Foundation, Barca Leeds amended their proposal and budget to accommodate the £12,709 awarded and successfully applied to the Jimbo's Fund, managed by Leeds Community Foundation, for an additional £18,957 grant to enable them to deliver a comprehensive offer to the communities of LS12 and LS13.

"It's a friendly group – we have a laugh together"

"The place is nice and it gives me peace of mind. I feel at home there and it's interesting."

"When it get's to Sunday I think 'oh great it'll soon be Tuesday and men's group again"

Barca LEEDS
Unit 2
Northside Exchange
Wether Lane
Leeds
LS5 3BT
Registered Charity Number 1048596
Company Number 2949619

The West Leeds Men's Network
#Unlocking Barriers

Armley meet up
THURSDAY 12PM - 2PM
Christ Church
Armley Ridge Road
LS13 3LN

The West Leeds Men's Network
The West Leeds Men's Network is free for any men from Armley or Bramley to join.
Do you want to get out and do something more often?
Want to eat well and feel better?
Get some tips on managing stress?
Take part in regular social activities?
Come to one of our regular meet ups in either Armley or Bramley.
To find out more, please give Ian a text or call on 07738 107012.
Make a change for yourself and feel better for it.

Bramley meet up
TUESDAY 2PM - 4PM
Bramley Community Centre
Waterloo Lane
LS15 2JB

Other Outcomes and Longer-Term Legacy

Whilst the primary focus of the programme is about reaching and supporting men around suicide prevention and the risk factors for suicide, it also about building Third Sector capacity in the city, increasing awareness and expertise, strengthening connections across key partners and gathering learning through piloting new place-based, person-centred approaches.

Reports to date for the 9 projects funded in Round 1 and 2 show that:

- All 9 TSOs report having developed **new or strengthened relationships with other organisations** (statutory and non) through the funding, enabling them to build strong supportive connections, maximise learning, support referrals, access peer-support around their work with supporting men. This has taken place:
 1. Within grantees - Humans Being, Cloth Cats, Barca Leeds, New Wortley Community Association for example. The February 2020 Learning event which all grantees attended further supported this.
 2. With local organisations - for example, Humans Being is now part of an informal network of third sector organisations delivering men's health work; Health for All connected in with Andy Man's Clubs and MINT; Leeds Mind have linked with businesses, the housing office, medical practices and the rugby club in LS18.
 3. More widely, like the West Leeds Men's Network project lead taking part in the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care partnership Online Network for Men's Support groups.
- 8 TSOs report having **increased organisational expertise** through the work funded - for example: through accessing relevant training such as SafeTALK training for volunteers and staff at Red Ladder

Theatre Company, Cloth Cats Studios, Humans Being) or walk leader training and Basic First Aid (New Wortley Community Association); learning about how to engage effectively with local businesses (Feel Good Factor); learning about peer-support facilitation (Health for All); increasing online and IT skills as a result of lockdown; or deepening their knowledge of the issues faced by men.

“We have grown as an organisation in terms of how we have learned to deliver on such a project but also what we have learned about this client group, which is so faceted and complex that sometimes I feel we have barely scratched the surface. It is fair to say that we have learned most is that there is so much more to learn.”

- 3 organisations have seen **new services or activities** emerging from the funded work: Human’s Being Long Distance Social Club is now an established service; Health for All’s allotment group for men continues to meet; Cloth Cat Studios now also offer walks and open-air music activities as a means to support men further.
- 6 TSOs have seen an increase in **organisational capacity** through this funding, predominately through being able to recruit new volunteers who can support the work and act as ambassadors.
- 7 TSOs have **accessed further funding** following this work: Humans Being has secured funding from The National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All for a men's wellbeing project and Harnessing the Power of Communities funding (Forum Central, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care partnership and NHS Leeds CCG funding managed by Leeds Community Foundation) for their Men's Health Ambassador project; New Wortley Community Association have received funding from Wades to run a Women's Walking group that will meet up periodically with the men's walking group; Feel Good Factor have had extension funding through the Leeds Fund Strategic Grants (Leeds Community Foundation) and Zest, Cloth Cat Studios and Barca Leeds have been awarded extension funding through Round 3 of the Leeds Men’s Suicide Prevention Programme.

Areas of Challenge

- **Evaluation:** As with other programmes supporting people around their health in non-medicalised ways, evaluation that is proportionate, meaningful and non-invasive for the men and people who participate can be a challenge. A balance between quantitative and qualitative evidence needs to be found but without it negatively affecting the relationship and trust building and the time available for person-centred support which are key to helping men in communities.
“Some of the men have poor literacy skills and find it difficult to engage with the formal techniques used in healthcare settings”.
Grantees have reported approaches that have worked, some which haven’t and alternative approaches have been explored. Support from an independent evaluator for a whole programme evaluation but also project tailored support could provide valuable added capacity for groups, an a legacy.

- **Number of beneficiaries:** Not all grantees have reached the number of men they aspired to at application stage; however, they have reached men who have not engaged with services in other ways and men with sometimes complex circumstances and needs who have required more intense support at times. The number of men reached will include some duplication which is hard to account for precisely without further individual details but some of the men will have benefitted from engaging with different activities and people on different days (e.g. some of Cloth Cats' men engaged in Humans Being Zoom courses). This supports a more holistic offer and longer-term support for men at risk (especially as funding ends at different times for projects for example).

Conclusions

This grant programme is the first of its kind to be delivered in Leeds around men's suicide prevention. The momentum and impact it has gathered is largely down to three key elements:

- **A strong partnership** based on support, sharing of expertise, experience, commitment and shared vision between commissioners and staff at Leeds City Council/Public Health, grant-makers at Leeds Community Foundation and also Leeds' Third Sector Organisations/grantees. This also enabled pilots and newer, less-'traditional' approaches to be funded (e.g. the Red Ladder Theatre Company project) and the opportunity to explore and overcome potential concerns from senior colleagues by working with grantees to provide additional guidance and reassurance.
- **A 3 year timeline:** this has enabled consistent awareness raising around this important issue; it has empowered a range of Third Sector Organisations to consider, in very different ways, how they can effectively support this work of engaging and supporting men at risk. It has also allowed for flexibility of project timelines and delivery approaches so that unforeseen delays, such as recruitment issues or, more recently, Covid-19 and lockdown measures, can be accommodated and positive outcomes for men in our city ensured. It has also supported opportunities to gain and share learning and opportunities for longer term, sustainable support for men to grow and evolve. A 3 year+ grant timeline is recommended as a minimum for such a new, focused programme. As per the Funder reflections in the February 2020 Learning handbook:
"Longer term funding is acknowledged as being essential to sustaining impactful men-focused work in order to maintain safe spaces, build and maintain relationships with isolated men, co-produce creative solutions which are not 'one size fits all' and retain Third Sector Organisation staff expertise."
- The **Third Sector organisations** themselves who, through the wide range of funding they continually work hard to secure and their increasing expertise (as evidenced through this programme and the learning event), create an array of inter-linked opportunities, support mechanisms, pathways and services for men both locally and across the city. Key learning has been gathered over the 3 years and grantees are now better placed to continue their work of supporting men in a holistic, person-centred way. In some cases, further funding has been secured to build on this important work over a longer period.

Appendix 1 – Criteria for Round 3

Leeds Men's Suicide Prevention Large Grants

Round 3 – Spring 2020

Aim of the programme

Public Health – Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation are working in partnership to fund local third sector community initiatives aimed at men with high risk of suicide. We want to support social activities for men determined by local men themselves, and to provide outreach work with targeted communities in order to reduce social isolation. The focus of this programme is on areas of need where activities for socially isolated men are lacking. The targeted areas are Inner South West and Inner East Leeds, as these are communities with the highest suicide rates involving socially isolated men.

The programme will initially run for three years with over £70,000 distributed annually through both small grants of up to £10,000 and some large grants of up to £25,000.

Background

Suicide Prevention is a key public mental health priority in Leeds. There is a long-standing, multi-agency citywide Strategic Suicide Prevention Group, and the Leeds Suicide Audit 2014-2016 is nationally recognised as best practice. Leeds has also been cited as a best practice case study for investing in 'postvention' (*i.e.* timely and appropriate support provided to those bereaved by suicide). This service has been well evaluated and is contributing to global evidence of effective peer-led interventions.

However, until now the city has not directly funded activity with men who are Leeds's highest at risk group for suicide. The Leeds Suicide Audit published in 2016 found that 30% of all suicides in Leeds occurred amongst residents in the most deprived 20% of the city. Two out of three suicides were in the most deprived half of the city. This is consistent with previous audits and national trends in suicides.

Of the 31 postcode areas where suicides were recorded in Leeds, half of all individuals lived in just seven: LS6, LS8, LS9, LS11, LS12, LS15, and LS28. An additional seven postcode areas capture 80% of all suicides: LS13, LS14, LS16, LS17, LS19, LS25, and LS27.

Based on these findings, we are keen to fund activities working with men in these areas.

Who can apply?

Community groups, charities, social enterprises or other charitable organisations from the voluntary sector that:

- have a constitution or other relevant governance document
- have a management committee/board of directors/trustees of at least three unrelated people
- have a bank account under the name of the group with at least two unrelated signatories
- are based in or supporting people living in the Leeds Metropolitan District Area
- have been operating for two financial years or more and have an income of over £10,000 in the most recent financial year.

Groups with less than two years' experience or an income under £10,000 in the most recent year would not be eligible for a large grant, but may be able to [receive some support to build capacity and run a small grant pilot project](#).

Applications from organisations working in partnership, including with businesses and statutory partners, where the lead applicant is a third sector organisation are welcomed.

Size of Grant

Larger grants of between £10,000 and £25,000 are available for 12-24 month projects that will have a wide reach or potentially more significant impact than can be achieved through a smaller grant.

Grants will be made in staged payments over the 12-24 month period and can contribute to expanding or developing existing activity.

We are also keen to fund smaller projects. If you have an idea that could be tested as part of a smaller grant, please consider applying to the [small grants programme](#).

Whilst the grant can be used to part-fund a wide range of activities, we like to see the impact our support is having. Accordingly, we prefer for our grant to equal at least 50% of the total cost of the activity or project within the criteria specified below. Only one application per organisation can be considered.

What can the Fund support?

The programme is looking to fund grants that focus on:

- Communities where men are known to be at greater risk of suicide and social isolation i.e. (LS6, LS8, LS9, LS11, LS12, LS13, LS14, LS15, LS16, LS17, LS19, LS25, LS27 and LS28). Projects in high priority areas (i.e. LS6, LS8, LS9, LS11, LS12, LS15 and LS28) will be prioritised for large grant funding.
- The population group demographics and identified risk factors highlighted in the [Leeds Suicide Audit \(2014-16\)](#)
- Developing social activities for men determined by local men themselves or providing outreach work with targeted communities in order to reduce social isolation for men with higher risk of suicide in areas of need with fewer activities for socially isolated men.
- Local community engagement and participation in the development and delivery of successful projects. The application process will ask for details of how interested groups would achieve this.
- Local organisations delivering targeted evidence-based interventions in line with the [Leeds Suicide Prevention Action Plan](#). Priority will be given to organisations already working in Leeds with a good understanding of local communities and the Leeds Suicide Audit
- Applicants will need to demonstrate that they are either delivering new activity or increasing the reach of existing activity in relation to suicide prevention work with local communities. Care will need to be taken to ensure the grants are not used to fund services that should be a statutory responsibility, i.e. there needs to be some element of additionality in their work.
- Funding will include evaluating the projects. Impact will be measured both in quantitative terms (using agreed indicators), as well as the social impact of projects in the local context.
- The potential issues to be tackled are wide-ranging so we would suggest consideration is given, initially, to focusing on a few key issues or areas of activity. Activities might include: supporting engagement and empowerment of local people; encouraging innovation to support decision making and choice; widening access to local services that reduce the risk of suicide; capacity building to help emerging groups develop; use of new technologies and innovative ways of connecting with socially isolated men.

Exclusions

Grants will not be awarded to or for:

- Activities primarily for the advancement of religion or politics. We would however consider supporting the activities of such organisations if they are aimed at supporting the wider community in accordance with these guidelines
- Individuals, statutory organisations (such as schools, hospitals or medical centres, universities and colleges) or commercial entities
- Retrospective funding – activities that have taken place previously or costs already incurred
- Organisations that make a surplus or profit which is not reinvested for social benefit
- Establishment/preservation of endowment/welfare funds; organisations that redistribute funding for subsequent grant-making to other organisations and/or individuals
- Capital appeals for building projects, e.g. for rebuilding a community centre, heritage centres, visitor centres, museums, theatres or places of worship

When can you apply?

The fund opens on 16 January 2020 and the deadline to apply is 12 noon on Thursday 5 March 2020. Funding will be awarded in April 2020.

How do you apply for a grant?

To apply you need to complete an online application form available at the end of this document. You will also need to submit a signed copy of the organisation's governance document, signed copy of accounts, and list of name and addresses of management committee/board members, unless you have already submitted these documents to Leeds Community Foundation within the last 12 months.

To start filling in the online application form follow the link at the end of this document. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

What happens after you've applied?

We will acknowledge receipt of your application within five working days. We will then assess your application and may need to contact you and your referee during this time. If your application is shortlisted, it will then be submitted to an awards panel for further consideration. This panel will be made up of people with knowledge and expertise around the men and suicide agenda as well as community delivery. We'll tell you their decision as soon as possible after they've met.

If you are successful, the grant letter/e-mail will include any additional conditions set by the panel and/or the grant payment and a grant funding agreement you will need to sign. The grant must be spent within 12-24 months of the date of our letter confirming the grant. At the end of the grant, you will have to complete an end of grant report telling us how the grant has been spent and what was achieved. The deadline for doing so will be specified in your offer letter. Please note that failure to complete an end of grant report will exclude your organisation from applying to future grants schemes.

If your bid is not successful, we will let you know the reasons for declining it. Please note we have limited funding available and we are not able to fund every application we receive, no matter how deserving the project is. The decisions made by the grants panel are final.

Publicity

If your application is successful, you will be required to credit support from Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation, on all materials related to the funded work. Successful projects will be required to be available for a potential monitoring visit from funders.

Past and Future rounds

Round 2 took place in Spring 2019 and the following grantees were funded:

- **Health for All** (large grant) - Engaging isolated men from LS11 in a Menspace/Skills Hub programme to learn/develop practical skills (DIY, bricklaying, cooking etc.) while building friendships and gaining confidence.
- **New Wortley Community Association** (small grant) - A weekly walking group providing opportunities for socially isolated men living in New Wortley to come together, make friends and talk about issues they may be facing.
- **Red Ladder Theatre Company** (small grant) - Delivery of the 'Life & Soul II' project that uses live theatre to create a space for vulnerable and isolated men in Leeds to come together and bring the subject of mental health and suicide into the open.
- **Cloth Cat Studios Limited** (small grant) - Creative group activities (including live and computer based music (learning and/or performance), Photography, Virtual Reality, Film and Animation) to reduce social isolation, initiate friendships and reignite a spark for music and digital arts.
- **Humans Being** (small grant) - The training of 30 community cafe volunteers as men's wellbeing ambassadors. Ambassadors use their skills and life experiences to support vulnerable men who use the cafes.
- **Zest Health for Life** (small grant) – Extension of the organisation's IMPACT programme which engages isolated men and provide opportunities to meet new people and learn additional skills.

Successful grantees from Round 1 and Round 2 will be eligible to apply for continuation funding in Round 3, subject to their project delivery being successful and outcomes for men evidenced.

To Apply

Click [here](#) for the online application form.

If you post documents to us please send them to the address below using the correct postage and make sure the documents are received by us before the deadline.

If you have any questions regarding the programme criteria and/or your proposed project then please contact Vineeta Sehmbi at Leeds City Council (Email: Vineeta.sehmbi@leeds.gov.uk; Phone 0113 37 86056) or Sam Caldwell at Leeds Community Foundation (Email: Sam@leedscf.org.uk; Phone 0113 242 2426).

Leeds Community Foundation

51a St Pauls Street

Leeds

LS1 2TE

T: 0113 242 2426

E: info@leedscf.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1096892

