

PRESS RELEASE

Berkeley Foundation commits over £345k to combatting youth homelessness



Six charities have been awarded funding from the Berkeley Foundation to pilot new and innovative methods of supporting young people aged 18-30 years who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

These projects will receive a share of £345,439 and will explore different approaches to tackling this pressing issue, through mentoring, workshops, support sessions, work experience, and participatory research led by young tenants living in the private rented sector.

Young people are three times more likely to have been homeless in the last five years than older adults. 225,000 young people in London have stayed in an unsafe place because they had nowhere to call home, and only one in five aged 16-24 seek help from the council. Welfare reform and the housing crisis are only worsening the situation.

Berkeley Foundation will be funding projects delivered by Central Eltham Youth Project (CEYP), Elmbridge Rentstart, The Foyer Federation, Settle, Toynbee Hall and SPEAR Housing Association. Each project will focus on a specific group of young people, including those experiencing homelessness, leaving care, leaving the justice system and fleeing violence or trauma.

The programmes will span the London boroughs of Greenwich, Bexley, Lewisham, Croydon, Lambeth, Southwark, Merton, Richmond, Kingston, and Tower Hamlets. Programmes will also be delivered in Surrey, Kent, Hertfordshire, Hampshire, and West Sussex.

The grants have been awarded through the Berkeley Foundation's Community Investment Fund. The programme aims to support young people to access good quality, sustainable housing, as well as helping those at-risk to avoid homelessness.

The six projects are:

- **Central Eltham Youth Project** – CEYP's *Under One Roof* project will deliver skills workshops, accredited careers advice, and peer mentoring support to help **450 young people from Greenwich, Bexley and Lewisham**, who are at high risk of homelessness and in need of long-term, intensive support, to secure and maintain a tenancy.

- **Elmbridge Rentstart** - The *Housing and Support* project will pilot new youth programmes around employment and mental health as well as providing workshops covering tenancy responsibilities, budgeting, and registering for benefits for **120 young people**, who are homeless or vulnerably housed in **Elmbridge and Runnymede**, the majority of whom will have been sleeping rough. The project aims to help young people settle into the private rental sector and to access work, education or volunteering.
- **Foyer Federation** –The *Corporate Connections* project will broker partnerships between 14 residential Foyers across **London, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Kent, Hampshire, and West Sussex**, and 10 local employers, to provide mentoring, work experience and shadow day opportunities for **100 young people**. The project takes an Advantaged Thinking approach that focuses on young people’s assets to increase the chances of them moving on to independent living.
- **Settle** – The charity supports young and inexperienced social housing tenants with a history of homelessness or being in care. Their *Tenancy Mentoring Programme* will **help 70 young adults from Greenwich, Bexley and Lewisham** to gain the skills needed to manage their money, home and health. The programme is made up of weekly one-to-one support sessions that are delivered in the young people's homes for up to six months.
- **Toynbee Hall** – The organisation will train **10 young people living in private rented accommodation in East London** to lead research into the private rental sector and work with private landlords to mitigate against rising youth homelessness. The project aims to overcome key barriers to renting faced by young people.
- **SPEAR** – The *Youth Skills Development Programme* will equip **64 young people** experiencing homelessness **in Merton, Kingston and Richmond** with the skills, confidence and support they need to build a positive and independent future. The programme will include one-to-one employment, education and training support, independent living training, and practical group activities covering cookery, computer skills and fitness.

Rich Grahame, CEO of Settle says:

“We're thrilled to be supported by the Berkeley Foundation's Community Investment Fund. This invaluable funding has come at a crucial time in Settle's development and will enable us to support 70 additional vulnerable young people who are living independently for the first time, arming them with the skills they need to manage their money, home and health. We look forward to working with the Berkeley Foundation over the coming years to break the cycle of youth homelessness”.

Sally Dickinson, Head of the Berkeley Foundation said:

“Far too many young people are finding themselves at risk of homelessness in a system that can be very difficult to navigate. At the Berkeley Foundation we are committed to supporting the best in frontline delivery for young people. Each of the organisations we are funding is working to prevent – or end – youth homelessness using a range of pioneering approaches. We are excited to be working with all six charities over the next two years”.

For more information about the six funded projects, visit www.berkeleyfoundation.org.uk

The Berkeley Foundation's next Community Investment Fund programme will be open to applications in June 2019 and will focus on the area of skills development for young people in London, the South of England, and Birmingham.

Notes to Editor:

Further information

For further information, please contact Sally Healy, Programme Officer – sally.healy@berkeleyfoundation.org.uk / 01932 584 552.

Image Credit

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Available for download here - <https://berkeley-group.sharefile.eu/d-s8a4947579f84eec8>

About the Berkeley Foundation

- The Berkeley Foundation was established in March 2011. It focuses on four main areas a safe place to call home, health and wellbeing, the skills to succeed and access to employment – and has changed the lives of more than 18,000 people so far across London, Birmingham and the South of England.
- The Berkeley Foundation is a registered charity and has already committed £15 million to more than 115 charity partners, with over £5 million given through staff fundraising and Give as You Earn.
- This work has been recognised with five major awards already, including the 2017 Third Sector Business Charity Award for the 'Best Corporate Foundation'.

For more information, visit www.berkeleyfoundation.org.uk

About The Berkeley Group

- Over the last 5 years, the Berkeley Group has built a total of 19,500 homes.
- Since December 2018, we have had more than 350 apprentices working on our sites.
- We have less than two safety incidents per 1,000 staff each year across all our sites.
- We are creating 519 acres of public realm and planting 9500 trees
- £14.9 million has been committed by the Berkeley Foundation to over 115 charities since 2011, with more than £5 million raised by Berkeley staff.
- For more information, visit <http://www.berkeleygroup.co.uk>