



Case study: One King Ministries

August 2021

One King Ministries is a registered charity based in Havering that provides activities and services for the elderly to support their wellbeing, reduce loneliness, and help them with daily challenges. Their elderly group 'Silver Links' takes part in arts and craft activities, including producing twiddle muffs – knitted muffs – for people with dementia to provide a source of sensory stimulation.

One King Ministries received £46,020 through the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF). The CCSF is a funding programme supported by a grant of £200 million from Government, distributed by The National Lottery Community Fund, to help organisations in England respond to the COVID-19 crisis and increase community support to people affected by the pandemic.

How was the CCSF grant used?

Due to many elderly people having to shield and being isolated at home, the demand for One King Ministries' services increased during the pandemic, with between 10 and 25 new members joining each month, overall about 50%. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions meant that One King Ministries were no longer able to run their weekly elderly group meetings in person. Instead, staff and volunteers called all group members and sent a monthly newsletter to around 100 members to keep them engaged and informed. One King Ministries also used the CCSF grant to purchase a small number of tablets to keep in touch with members.

Elderly people were often isolated at home, with no family members in the area and no access to food. One King Ministries used the CCSF grant to deliver home-cooked meals to members up to seven days a week as an addition to their core service. To meet the increased demand for their services and to deliver food during the CCSF grant period, One King Ministries recruited four staff members and four more volunteers.

“
[Without CCSF] I would not have been able to do what I have done, would not have been able to help them deliver food, give them food, give them cooked food, made them excited about eating again if we didn't have the funding”
– Grantholder

Part of the CCSF grant was also used to purchase knitting materials for the 'Silver Links' group and volunteers to enable them to continue knitting at home. Finished products including twiddle muffs, blankets or dolls, which were then delivered to care homes for people with dementia and children with disabilities in the area. This had positive benefits for the wider community.

Quick facts:

Grant period: **July 2020-January 2021**

60 elderly people supported

Up to **50** meals delivered each week

70 Christmas hampers delivered

1000 twiddle muffs knitted

Monthly newsletter sent to **100 contacts**

Three key messages:

- ① Without the CCSF grant, the charity would have not been able to provide their food delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ② Weekly phone calls and monthly newsletters allowed volunteers to check in with elderly group members and sign-post or provide additional support if needed.
- ③ A new collaboration with a local homeless charity provided the opportunity to meet group members face-to-face when restrictions allowed.

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What difference did the CCSF grant make?

For people and communities

Around 60 people were supported using the CCSF funding. For example, One King Ministries used the CCSF grant to deliver home-cooked meals to their members up to seven days each week. This included delivering up to 50 meals per week and 70 Christmas hampers. The charity received positive feedback from members saying they enjoyed the food. Receiving meals helped meet members' immediate needs and it supported their health during the pandemic, which may have otherwise suffered due to challenges accessing food.

One King Ministries also supported their members with weekly phone calls (to replace the weekly in-person meetings) so that they had regular social contact. Members were listened to and offered further support if needed. Staff often received appreciative comments from members, highlighting the importance of this contact: "Thank you for calling, I'm so happy to hear your voice." Staff members felt that this contact, and for some, being able to continue knitting, had a positive impact on members' mental wellbeing.



This one particular lady was so sad. She was so frail because of being inside all the time ... But then there was a little time when we were allowed to meet in restaurants. She started knitting for us. She was walking better after the 7 or 8 weeks. Now, she's also more able to talk to us, she's not so fragile because she's been making friends, sitting at the same table with the same people. She's very excited to do some knitting.
– Grantholder

Key learning from the experience:

It takes time to listen to and build relationships and trust with members, especially when support takes place over the telephone. Future service delivery needs to build in sufficient time for staff and volunteers to understand and acknowledge members' individual circumstances and feelings.

Want to know more?

Website:

<https://onekingministrieschurch.wordpress.com/>

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/SLHavering/?ref=page_internal

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/silverlinksnetwork/>

For volunteers

One King Ministries recruited four additional volunteers during their CCSF grant period. The charity offers different roles for volunteers depending on how they want to help – from knitting to telephone support or food delivery. Volunteers reported that they enjoyed helping out and being able to support others made them happy. One volunteer described "being over the moon" to support the charity with knitting.

For some volunteers, volunteering supported them through difficult personal circumstances, for example, bereavement or struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts. One found new joy in knitting for others and stayed up very late every night to continue knitting. Another explained that the charity helped them re-evaluate their life and that the experience was so important that they were "truly alive because of that". Volunteering provided them with a way of healing by caring about others and being part of the community.



One of the best things that happened to me in my life. I absolutely love it... One day when I'm an older person, I would pray to have someone like [trustee of One King Ministries] in my area.
– Volunteer/Staff

For the organisation and its staff

The CCSF grant enabled One King Ministries to employ four additional staff members. However, with the increased demand for the services, staff members turned down their salary so that the charity could purchase more food and knitting materials and carry out any other maintenance, cleaning or gardening for the elderly.

One King Ministries also started a new collaboration with a local homelessness charity. When COVID-19 restrictions eased, they used the café of the charity for their weekly elderly group meetings. The charities plan to continue working together in the future.



I went [to the homelessness charity] and spoke to the manager. He said that would be brilliant to have you ladies here. [Members] got their Dial-a-Ride back, they were coming and they were very excited. – Grantholder