Invitation to Tender:
Evaluation of Know Your Neighbourhood Strand 1

Deadline for receipt of tender proposals: 5pm Wednesday 12th July 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Arts Council England (ACE) are delivering part (Strand 1) of the DCMS Know Your Neighbourhood fund designed to widen participation in volunteering and tackle loneliness in 27 disadvantaged areas across England.

ACE is working with 3 cultural partners:

- Libraries Connected
- Association of Independent Museums
- Creative Lives

ACE will provide grant funding to delivery organisations in the library, museum and community led sectors in the 27 geographical areas identified as high priority.

Libraries Connected is procuring and commissioning an evaluation on behalf of ACE to measure success across activities delivered by all 3 cultural partners against the following objectives:

Objective 1:

Build the evidence base by March 2025 to understand how, and to what extent, interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in areas of high deprivation can be most effective in increasing the availability of, and participation in, impactful and meaningful volunteering opportunities.

Objective 2:

Build the evidence base by March 2025 to understand how, and to what extent interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in areas of high deprivation can be most effective in supporting people at higher risk of loneliness to make the social connections they desire.

Objective 3:

By March 2025, increase participation in volunteering opportunities that participants agree are impactful and meaningful within the arts, culture and heritage sectors in target areas.

Objective 4:

By March 2025, increase the number of people from groups most at risk of chronic loneliness who participate in arts, culture and heritage opportunities that support them to make the social connections they desire.

The programme runs from March 2023 to May 2025.

1.1. Procurement Partners

Libraries Connected

Libraries Connected is a charity partly funded by Arts Council England as the Sector Support Organisation for libraries. We are also proud to remain a membership organisation, made up of every library service in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Crown Dependencies.

Our vision is an inclusive, modern, sustainable, and high-quality public library service at the heart of every community in the UK. We work to promote the value of libraries; broker national partnerships share best practice and drive innovation in the sector.

We:

- Represent the public library sector to communicate the value of libraries
- Connect partners to local libraries by brokering national relationships with a wide range of organisations and individuals
- Improve library services by developing and sharing best practice, providing training for library staff, and facilitating a network of library leaders in the UK
- Drive innovation and new thinking on the role of libraries in a modern society.

Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for arts and culture, including public libraries and is supporting this evaluation with a grant.

2 KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD (KYN) PROGRAMME

2.1 Overview

The Know Your Neighbourhood Fund is split into two strands:

- Strand 1 (£5m total grant fund), as outlined in this ITT, will explore how arts, culture and heritage interventions can support outcomes for volunteering and social connection across our target Levelling Up areas.
- Strand 2 (£14m total grant fund), will be delivered by UK Community Foundations (UKCF) and a consortium of local community foundations, and will invest in nine places to deliver in-depth learning on how local communities can increase volunteering and reduce loneliness.

2.2 Strand 1 Details and Delivery Partners:

Libraries Connected

Libraries Connected, in partnership with ACE will distribute £2,450,000 to libraries to engage additional volunteers and host activities.

- Anticipated 26 grants
- Delivered through 26 library services responsible for delivery within the 27 areas.
  ACE will support libraries with applications and proposals.
- Grant applications open April 2023.
  Grants awarded on a rolling basis every 4 weeks up to July 2023.

AIM

The Association of Independent Museums will distribute £950,000 to local museums. This will support the creation of new volunteering roles and strengthen museums' ability to run future programmes.

- Anticipated around 20-40 grants
- Grants offered between £10-100k to local museums, with capacity support from AIM.
- April 2023 round 1 opens for applications, engagement with prospective applicants will run till June '23.

Creative Lives

Creative Lives will distribute £900,000 to fund voluntary creative groups across England to promote and deliver targeted creative activities to support people at risk of loneliness and isolation.

- Anticipated 40 grant commissions of up to £10k to new voluntary creative groups.
- Anticipated 20 development grants of up to £20k to support larger scale multifaceted activities.
- April 2023 grant programmes open (Initial pilot happening in 5 eligible areas)
- 2 x Creative commissions rounds open to all areas (July 2023 and March 2024)
- 2 x Development grants rounds open to all areas (July 2023 and March 2024)

2.3 Overarching Evaluation

An overarching evaluation, covering strands 1 and 2, has been commissioned by DCMS and will be carried out by RSM UK (RSM) . This is referred to as the 'overall evaluation.' As part of the overall evaluation, RSM will conduct:

- A process evaluation consisting of interviews with a sample of delivery organisations and project participants across strands 1 and 2.
- An impact evaluation which builds on data collected by strand level evaluators and delivery organisations. RSM has developed monitoring information requirements and key outcome measures to be used by strand level evaluators in conducting quantitative data collection (Annex 1). RSM will synthesise these strand level findings alongside any qualitative data collection to feed into the overall evaluation.

3. DELIVERABLES

We are seeking an evaluation provider who will:

- Work with all partners to develop a clear approach to evaluation that fits within the overall evaluation as identified in Appendix 1.
- Deliver an evaluation that meets the objectives on page 1.
- Work with the stakeholders – including RSM – to design a process to capture relevant quantitative monitoring and evaluation data in line with the theory of change and measurement details in the appendix.
- Ensure that qualitative data is captured to illuminate and enrich the findings

3.1 Assumptions

All organisations will be fully engaged throughout the process. Requirements for provision of evaluation data are written into grantee funding agreements at all levels.

Duplication of collection is eliminated where possible, and data provision is minimised across the two evaluation bodies.

A basic level of data about funded projects will be collected as part of the DCMS monitoring requirements (available on request). Additional data collection tools and methodologies to measure impact will be negotiated as part of this contract.

The partnership is collaborative in its approach to solutions and will share / publish the findings nationally for adapted use locally.

The project will work in good faith, in confidence and with a shared purpose.

Tenderers and partners will work to minimise costs and maximise results.

The evaluator will build in processes that enable timely sharing of data and findings with the overall programme evaluator (RSM).

4. OUTPUTS

- A clearly articulated and completed evaluation plan with all partners
- Interim evaluation report after year 1 of the fund delivery
- Final published report addressing the objectives set out on page 1.
- Make available any data collected and template reports to support evaluation of individual funded projects

5. CONTRACT GOVERNANCE

The contract will be managed by Iain Moore, Commercial Director at Libraries Connected. The work will be subject to a governance structure consisting of a steering group of key partners including ACE and the cultural partners with the DCMS commissioned evaluators RSM. The evaluators will need to report into the KYN steering and learning boards.

6.WORKPLAN AND MILESTONES

We envisage the project will follow this workplan, but proposals can set out an alternative timetable to meet the deliverables.

Overall Time Period: 1st July 2023 – 30 April 2025

This time period covers the length of the programme plus 1 additional month in which to finalise the final evaluation report following the end of activity.

Milestones:

Scoping / evaluation plan with process and tools in place	1st September 2023
Interim evaluation report of year 1 of the fund delivery	1st May 2024
Final published report addressing the objectives set out on page 1.	1st May 2025

7.BUDGET

£108,000 including VAT and travel and expenses.

Whilst many of the stakeholder engagement meetings can be conducted virtually, there is an expectation that tenderers will visit some sites to review in person events.

Travel, accommodation, sustenance, and any other reasonable costs incurred by the tenderers as part of project should be costed in the overall budget.

8. PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

8.1 Procurement timetable

- Monday 19 June: ITT issued
- 5pm on Wednesday 12 July: Deadline for responding to the ITT and initial scoring by LC
- Monday 17 July: Potential provider discussions
- Friday 22 July: Notify Successful bidder

8.2 Proposal content

Proposals should demonstrate:

- Understanding of the project and deliverables
- Tenderers responses should provide evidence that they have excellent and relevant skills, expertise and experience to deliver the breadth of analytical work required. The response should demonstrate tenderers ability to deliver similar/comparable contracts in terms of scale and nature. It is acceptable to subcontract - tenderers should make it clear if they intend to subcontract any aspect, and detail how they would put these arrangements into place over the course of the contract.
- Please demonstrate the relevant project and risk management skill, experience and expertise of your organisation and staff, to undertake this work.
- Please demonstrate that you have sufficient capacity to carry out this work, either through internal resources or subcontracting arrangements.
- Proposed methodology
- Costs, including breakdown for costs of each phase or unit of work, day rate of each team member and other costs or expenses

8.3 Proposal submission

Please email proposals to info@librariesconnected.org.uk by 5pm on Wednesday 12 July.

Any late or incomplete submissions will not be evaluated.

8.4 Evaluation of proposals

We will evaluate proposals using these criteria:

CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
Understanding project and deliverables	20
Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including an understanding of policies, strategies, and relevant literate within the scope of this work	20
Project and Risk Management Capacity and Capability	15
Staffing and resourcing capacity	15
Quality of methodology and experience in relation to development of strategy and programmes	20
Cost	10

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

For an informal discussion about the work, please contact:

Iain Moore Iain.Moore@librariesconnected.org.uk

Appendix 1: Extracts from programme evaluation

KYN Fund excerpts from the Programme level evaluation plan to guide strand 1 evaluation
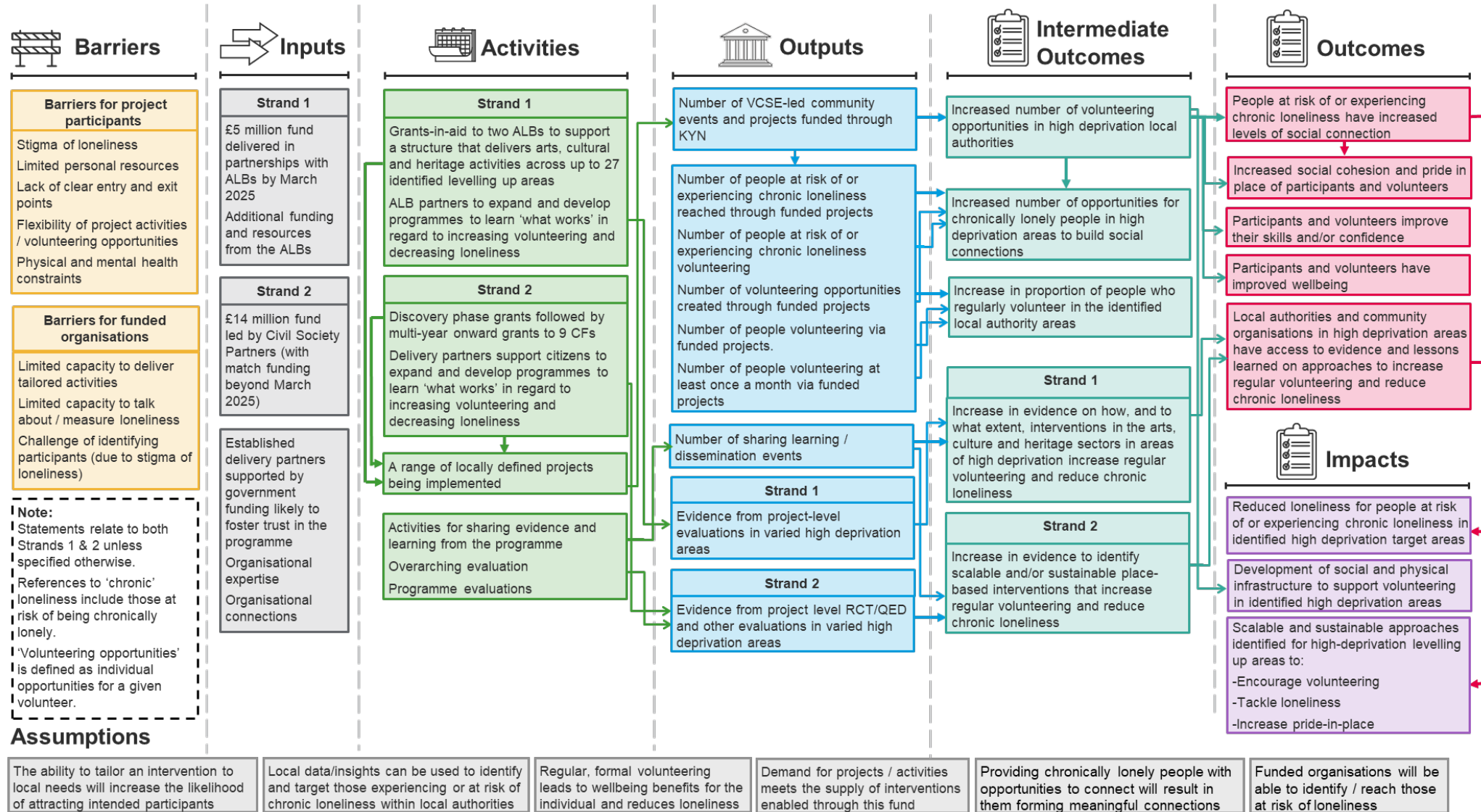
- **Theory of Change**
- **MI indicators**
- **Outcome measures**

1. THEORY OF CHANGE

1.1 ToC diagram

Figure 3: Theory of Change diagram

Barriers

Barriers for project participants
- Stigma of loneliness
- Limited personal resources
- Lack of clear entry and exit points
- Flexibility of project activities / volunteering opportunities
- Physical and mental health constraints

Barriers for funded organisations
- Limited capacity to deliver tailored activities
- Limited capacity to talk about / measure loneliness
- Challenge of identifying participants (due to stigma of loneliness)

Note:
- Statements relate to both Strands 1 & 2 unless specified otherwise.
- References to 'chronic' loneliness include those at risk of being chronically lonely.
- 'Volunteering opportunities' is defined as individual opportunities for a given volunteer.

Inputs

Strand 1
£5 million fund delivered in partnerships with ALBs by March 2025
Additional funding and resources from the ALBs

Strand 2
£14 million fund led by Civil Society Partners (with match funding beyond March 2025)

Established delivery partners supported by government funding likely to foster trust in the programme
Organisational expertise
Organisational connections

Activities

Strand 1
Grants-in-aid to two ALBs to support a structure that delivers arts, cultural and heritage activities across up to 27 identified levelling up areas
ALB partners to expand and develop programmes to learn 'what works' in regard to increasing volunteering and decreasing loneliness

Strand 2
Discovery phase grants followed by multi-year onward grants to 9 CFs
Delivery partners support citizens to expand and develop programmes to learn 'what works' in regard to increasing volunteering and decreasing loneliness

A range of locally defined projects being implemented

Activities for sharing evidence and learning from the programme
Overarching evaluation
Programme evaluations

Outputs

Number of VCSE-led community events and projects funded through KYN

Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness reached through funded projects
Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness volunteering
Number of volunteering opportunities created through funded projects
Number of people volunteering via funded projects.
Number of people volunteering at least once a month via funded projects

Number of sharing learning / dissemination events

Strand 1
Evidence from project-level evaluations in varied high deprivation areas

Strand 2
Evidence from project level RCT/QED and other evaluations in varied high deprivation areas

Intermediate Outcomes

Increased number of volunteering opportunities in high deprivation local authorities

Increased number of opportunities for chronically lonely people in high deprivation areas to build social connections

Increase in proportion of people who regularly volunteer in the identified local authority areas

Strand 1
Increase in evidence on how, and to what extent, interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in areas of high deprivation increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness

Strand 2
Increase in evidence to identify scalable and/or sustainable place-based interventions that increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness

Outcomes

People at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness have increased levels of social connection

Increased social cohesion and pride in place of participants and volunteers

Participants and volunteers improve their skills and/or confidence

Participants and volunteers have improved wellbeing

Local authorities and community organisations in high deprivation areas have access to evidence and lessons learned on approaches to increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness

Impacts

Reduced loneliness for people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness in identified high deprivation target areas

Development of social and physical infrastructure to support volunteering in identified high deprivation areas

Scalable and sustainable approaches identified for high-deprivation levelling up areas to:
- Encourage volunteering
- Tackle loneliness
- Increase pride-in-place

Assumptions

The ability to tailor an intervention to local needs will increase the likelihood of attracting intended participants

Local data/insights can be used to identify and target those experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness within local authorities

Regular, formal volunteering leads to wellbeing benefits for the individual and reduces loneliness

Demand for projects / activities meets the supply of interventions enabled through this fund

Providing chronically lonely people with opportunities to connect will result in them forming meaningful connections

Funded organisations will be able to identify / reach those at risk of loneliness

1.2　Beneficiaries

Following discussions during our ToC workshops, the beneficiaries for the programme areas were agreed as the following:

Table 3: Beneficiaries

Group	Description	Beneficiaries
Primary beneficiaries	The main groups the KYN Fund seeks to target. They experience direct results from being engaged by funded projects either via project activities or through volunteering opportunities created.	• People experiencing chronic loneliness • People at risk of chronic loneliness • Volunteers (including new and existing volunteers)
Secondary beneficiaries	The groups that benefit from the outcomes experienced by direct beneficiaries.	• People living in identified areas of high deprivation, including those helped by volunteers in KYN funded projects • Onward grantholder organisations (local level VCSEs, community groups, etc.) • Wider culture and arts sector (Strand 1 specific)

Discussions around primary beneficiaries in workshops revealed concerns around whether the programme intended to focus only on people experiencing 'chronic' loneliness.

Loneliness is a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship, which happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of the social relationships that we have, and those that we want. It is normal to feel lonely sometimes, but it is a problem when someone feels lonely always or often. We call this <u>chronic</u> loneliness.

- DCMS Tackling Loneliness Team

Therefore, an additional category of people 'at risk of chronic loneliness' was also proposed as being a primary beneficiary group. DCMS identify the following ten groups as being most at risk of chronic loneliness:

- Young people (16-34)
- People who identify as LGBT
- People who recently moved to their current address
- People who live alone
- People in the lowest income quintile
- People with a mental health condition
- People with a disability or long term health condition
- New parents
- People who are widowed
- People who are unemployed

This does not exclude other groups that may also be known to be at risk of chronic loneliness that are identified by projects as a key group to work with.

A further distinction was made between loneliness and social isolation, where the latter is a measure of the quantum of social relationships an individual has, whereas loneliness additionally refers to the quality of those relationships. Projects should not treat social isolation as a proxy for loneliness.

There were similar concerns amongst delivery partners around whether the key target group was new volunteers or whether existing volunteers could be counted as project beneficiaries. It was concluded that volunteers would include both new and existing volunteers.

For secondary beneficiaries, people in identified high deprivation areas are likely to benefit from the funded projects by way of improvements to social infrastructure and opportunities to volunteer. Onward grantholder organisations are also likely to benefit not only from the funding but through increased capacity via shared learning and best practices in loneliness reduction. There is a secondary beneficiary group specific to Strand 1, namely, the wider arts and culture sector. This group is likely to benefit from the focus of funded projects which intend to support and utilise local arts and culture sector institutions within deprived communities, specifically libraries (via Libraries Together), local museums (via AiM Museums) and High Street Heritage Action Zones (via Historic England).

1.3   Assumptions and Barriers

1.3.1 Assumptions

The programme's success relies on a number of **assumptions** which need to hold true in order for activities to lead to the desired outcomes. These assumptions, that will be tested through the evaluation are:

> The ability to tailor an intervention to local needs will increase the likelihood of attracting intended participants

> Local data/insights can be used to identify and target those experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness within local authorities

> Regular, formal volunteering leads to wellbeing benefits and a reduction in loneliness

> There is a suitable demand for projects / activities that can meet the supply of interventions enabled through this fund

> Providing chronically lonely people with opportunities to connect will result in them forming meaningful connections

> Funded organisations will be able to identify / reach those at risk of loneliness

1.3.2 Barriers

A key part of the ToC review involved identifying potential barriers that would affect the ability of the KYN Fund to deliver its programme objectives. Barriers have been split by those affecting participants and those affecting organisations delivering funded projects.

Barriers for participants:

- **Stigma of loneliness** - People experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness may resist identifying as lonely, which means they may opt-out of interventions that are branded around reducing loneliness. Even if a participant wants to engage in activities, the stigma around loneliness may discourage them from doing so, making it harder for projects to identify them and / or measure the change in levels of loneliness.

- **Personal resources** – People in high deprivation areas may not have the required resources to participate in volunteering opportunities or funded project activities.

- **A lack of clear entry and exit points** – People experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness in high deprivation areas may face barriers to awareness of and access to project activities and volunteering opportunities, particularly due to lack of transport.

- **Flexibility of project activities / volunteering opportunities** – Project activities and volunteering opportunities need to be flexible or of high enough quality to attract volunteers from high deprivation areas who may have competing priorities which reduces their ability to dedicate time to volunteering

- **Physical and mental health** – People in high deprivation areas experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness face physical and mental health barriers to participating in volunteering or other project activities, particularly if they are elderly or have multiple complex needs.

Barriers for funded organisations:

- **Limited capacity to deliver tailored activities** – Small community organisations have limited capacity to deliver tailored activities that appeal to a wide range of participants.

- **Limited capacity to talk about / measure loneliness** – Small community organisations may also have limited capacity to talk about and measure loneliness. The knowledge-base around loneliness interventions is a growing field and best practices may not have filtered down to the implementation level. This includes common measures for tracking changes in loneliness over time.

- **Challenge of identifying participants** – People experiencing or at risk of chronic loneliness may be hard to identify and recruit to project activities and require a more targeted and proactive approach due to the stigma of loneliness. Inputs and Activities

1.3.3 Inputs

Inputs are the resources needed to deliver the individual training programme activities. The following inputs were identified and agreed through the ToC workshops:

- A £19 million fund to be delivered in partnership by March 2025 (with match funding from some partners going beyond this period for Strand 2). This is split by:
  - £5 million delivered by ACE, NLHF and HE (Strand 1)
  - £14 million delivered by UKCF and a consortium of 9 CFs
- Established delivery partners supported by government funding likely to foster trust in the programme
- Delivery partners' learning and expertise from existing / past programmes
- Delivery partners' existing connections and networks

1.3.4 Activities

Proposed programme activities are split between Strands 1 and 2 with common activities outlined below. The main variation between the Strands in activities is around how the grants will be made and the thematic nature of activities, with Strand 1 focusing on arts, cultural and heritage activities and Strand 2 employing a place-based approach to project activities, i.e., they will be locally led. The common thread between both strands is the objective of the interventions which are intended to focus on volunteering, tackling loneliness or volunteering **and** tackling loneliness. DCMS expects a 50/50 split between interventions focusing on volunteering and tackling loneliness across the programme.

Aside from funded project activities, there will be activities to support learning around 'what works' in regard to increasing volunteering and reducing loneliness. This involves learning events (opportunities to share learning), platforms for sharing learning e.g., Tackling Loneliness Hub, and project and programme-level evaluations.

Strand 1:

- Grants-in-aid to two ALB partners to deliver arts, cultural and heritage activities across up to 27 identified local authority areas
- ALB partners to expand and develop programmes to learn 'what works' in regard to increasing volunteering and decreasing loneliness

Strand 2:

- Discovery phase grants followed by multi-year onward grants to 9 CFs
- Delivery partners support citizens to expand and develop programmes to learn 'what works' in regard to increasing volunteering and decreasing loneliness
- Facilitating formative learning workshops with the Community Foundation and project delivery teams.
- Taking part in KYN-wide formative learning workshops (these would be organised and facilitated by Forever Consulting).

Strands 1 & 2

- A range of locally defined projects being implemented
- Activities for sharing evidence and learning from the programme
- Overarching evaluation
- Programme level evaluations

1.4   Outputs

Outputs are the direct result of funded project activities. The following outputs were developed and refined through the ToC review process, outlining who and how many project participants have been directly reached / engaged as well as how many and the type of learning materials produced via learning activities and project / programme level evaluations. As the projects have not yet been selected, outputs refer to overall numbers rather than specific targets. A key aim when developing these outputs was ensuring measurability as they will shape how funded projects report back on progress. This has been sense-checked with Strand 1 and 2 partners and a recommendation made to DCMS to ensure clarity around key definitions and the scope of the programme. These outputs will inform the metrics that will support the impact, process and VFM strands of the evaluation. They are linked to corresponding intermediate outcomes (2.7), specified in brackets after each output. The outputs are listed as follows:

- Number of VCSE-led community events and projects funded through KYN **(IO 1)**
- Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness reached through funded projects **(IO 2)**
- Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness volunteering **(IO 2)**
- Number of volunteering opportunities created through funded projects **(IO 2 & 3)**
- Number of people volunteering via funded projects **(IO 3)**
- Number of people volunteering at least once a month via funded projects **(IO 3)**
- Number of sharing learning / dissemination events **(IO 4 & 5)**
- Evidence from project-level evaluations / RCT/QED evaluations in varied high deprivation areas **(IO 4 & 5)**

1.5 Intermediate Outcomes

Intermediate outcomes represent the short-term changes that projects are likely to influence. They are a representation of the immediate consequences of the outputs for the beneficiary groups in the target project areas. Progress towards intermediate outcomes should be measured through data collected as part of monitoring and triangulated with data collected as part of the individual project-level evaluations which feed into the overall programme-level evaluation. Indicators for intermediate outcomes are likely to be drawn from the outputs listed above (2.6). Intermediate outcomes are listed below with detail behind the rationale for each.

1. **Increased number of volunteering opportunities in high deprivation local authorities:** This intermediate outcome refers to the volunteering opportunities created as a direct result of the funded projects. These may be new volunteering opportunities or existing opportunities that have been expanded.

2. **Increased number of opportunities for chronically lonely people in high deprivation areas to build social connections:** This intermediate outcome refers to the number of opportunities created via project activities aimed at tackling loneliness. There may be overlap with the previous intermediate outcome if projects are focused on volunteering and tackling loneliness.

3. **Increase in proportion of people who regularly volunteer in the identified local authority areas:** This intermediate outcome refers to the overall number of people who volunteer at least once a month in the identified areas. The distinction between this and intermediate outcome 1 is to track progress towards a KYN Fund objective of sustained and systematic changes, represented in this case not just by the overall number of volunteers but by the regularity of volunteering in target areas.

4. **Increase in evidence on how, and to what extent, interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in areas of high deprivation increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness (Strand 1):** This is a strand-specific intermediate outcome linked to the learning and evidence around how interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors can increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness. Progress towards this outcome refers to individual project-level evaluations and any learning events via convening grantholders or encouraging networked learning.

5. **Increase in evidence to identify scalable and/or sustainable place-based interventions that increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness (Strand 2):** As with the previous intermediate outcome, this focuses on the evidence from Strand 2 around the effectiveness of place-based interventions intended to increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness. Progress towards this outcome refers to individual project-level evaluations and any learning events via convening grantholders or encouraging networked learning.

1.6 Outcomes

Outcomes are the medium to long-term changes in behaviours and circumstances that the KYN Fund seeks to achieve through its funded projects. These are expected to be measurable within the programme period, however a potential limitation is that some outcomes may take longer to achieve, particularly around increased social cohesion and pride-in-place.

1. **People at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness have increased levels of social connection:** This outcome is linked directly to the overall KYN fund objective of tackling loneliness. Increased opportunities for chronically lonely people to build social connections is expected to increase their level of social connection. This refers to the quality of social connections as well as the overall number. A key assumption to be tested, linked to this outcome, is that providing chronically lonely people with opportunities to connect will result in them forming meaningful connections. The outcome is framed as an increase in social connection rather than as a reduction in loneliness as increasing social connection is a more measurable indicator which is likely to be realised during the

programme period. A change in loneliness levels may take longer to realise and is reflected at the impact-level (2.9).

2. **Increased social cohesion and pride-in-place of participants and volunteers:** The nature of the funded activities (arts, culture and heritage, and place-based interventions) is expected to contribute to increasing levels of social cohesion and pride-in-place of participants and volunteers. Linked to Outcome 1 above, funded activities that increase levels of social connection provide opportunities for increased social interaction of people with others in their communities. Furthermore, funded projects in high deprivation areas will take an asset-based community development approach, utilising or enhancing existing social infrastructure as part of their interventions, e.g., via High Street Heritage Action Zones. This is expected to result in participants gaining a greater appreciation of existing physical and social assets in their local area. It is acknowledged however that increasing pride-in-place as currently defined by existing measures may not be realistic for all types of projects.

3. **Participants and volunteers and improve their skills and / or confidence:** Volunteering opportunities from funded projects are expected to increase volunteers' skills and confidence in their ability to carry out activities, including those that support their communities. Interventions tackling loneliness are expected to support participants at risk of of who are chronically lonely to have increased confidence in building and maintaining social connections with the aim of eventually reducing loneliness levels in the long-term.

4. **Participants and volunteers have improved wellbeing:** There is evidence to indicate that volunteering improves the wellbeing of those who participate[1]. A key assumption that will be tested around this outcome is that increased opportunities for volunteering are expected to result in improved levels of wellbeing for volunteers and participants. Participants engaged in projects aimed at tackling loneliness are also expected to improve their wellbeing through increased opportunities for social interaction.

5. **Local authorities and community organisations in high deprivation areas have access to evidence and lessons learned on approaches to increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness:** A key outcome for the KYN fund is that local authorities and community organisations can benefit from and utilise the learning and best practices drawn from the individual project-level evaluations and learning activities. The metric for this outcome is the extent to which outputs from learning activities and project-level evaluations are accessible to the key stakeholders involved in reducing chronic loneliness in high deprivation areas.

1.7   Impact

Impacts refer to the long-term changes an intervention aims to achieve. The impact evaluation will gather evidence to indicate progress against these impacts as well as the contribution of KYN funded projects to the overarching impacts. For the KYN Fund, the impacts are as follows:

Reduced loneliness for people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness in identified high deprivation target areas
This impact reflects the overarching objective of the KYN Fund to reduce proportion of chronically lonely people in the target areas of high deprivation. Reduction in loneliness is a long-term change that may take place beyond the timeframe of the programme. The evaluation will gather evidence around progress towards reduction in overall loneliness based on collated evidence from project-level evaluations and the programme-level impact evaluation and progress towards the outcome around increased levels of social connection for people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness.

Development of social and physical infrastructure to support volunteering in identified high deprivation areas

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[1] The Impacts of Volunteering on the Subjective Wellbeing of Volunteers: A Rapid Evidence Assessment
Volunteer-wellbeing-technical-report-Oct2020-a-1.pdf (spiritof2012.org.uk)

This impact reflects the longer-term changes to the social and physical infrastructure that supports volunteering because of KYN funded activities aimed at increasing volunteering opportunities in high deprivation areas. This includes overall strengthening of the local VCSE sector, increased access to local infrastructure and funding support for local community initiatives and greater linkages between voluntary and community organisations and other systems of support such as the health system. Progress towards this impact should reflect the systemic and sustainable nature of funded projects.

Scalable and sustainable approaches identified for high-deprivation local authorities to:

- **Encourage volunteering**
- **Tackle loneliness**
- **Increase pride-in-place**

This impact is the expected result of the evidence-base gathered around scalable and sustainable interventions that work in increasing regular volunteering, reducing chronic loneliness and increasing pride in place in the identified high deprivation areas. It follows from Outcome 5 around local authorities and community organisations being able to access the learning and best practices from project-level evaluations and learning activities and reflects the longer-term aim of these stakeholders practically implementing changes as a result of this learning.

2. MONITORING INFORMATION DATA STRATEGY

Table 4: List of MI indicators for Strand 2. The table also highlights which indicators are mirrored in Strand 1

Area	ToC indicator	MI indicator (record level)	MI indicator (aggregate per project)	Strand 1
Output	Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness reached through funded projects	Total number of unique IDs per project (calculated only for projects that select a focus on loneliness in their application)	Total number of project participants reached	ACE– 6 monthly reporting template
Demographic - age	NA	Age in years	Number of project participants by age categories using the GSS harmonised category grouping C (0-15, 16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, 85+))	ACE – evaluator survey of beneficiaries
Demographic - gender	NA	Will use the approach suggested by the census – to first ask about sex at birth, then whether gender is different and then open text option to self-describe	Number of project participants by gender category Female/Male/Non-Binary/Prefer to self-define/Prefer not to say/Not asked	ACE - evaluator survey of beneficiaries
Demographic - ethnicity	NA	Ethnicity (as per GSS harmonised standards)	Number of project participants from ethnic minorities	ACE - evaluator survey of beneficiaries
Demographic - disability	NA	If participants have a disability (as per GSS harmonised standards)	Number of project participants with a disability	ACE-evaluator survey of beneficiaries

Area	ToC indicator	MI indicator (record level)	MI indicator (aggregate per project)	Strand 1
Output	Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness volunteering	Total number of unique IDs per project for those project participants selected as volunteers (calculated only for projects that select a focus on loneliness in their application)	Total number of volunteers recruited	ACE- 6 monthly reporting template
First time volunteers	NA	First time volunteer (Y/N)	Number of first time volunteers *This refers to people who have never formally volunteered (never given unpaid help to groups or clubs, for example, leading a group, administrative support or befriending or mentoring people) anywhere before.*	ACE - evaluator survey of beneficiaries
Returning to volunteering	NA	If N to previous question, when did you last volunteer (in the past month, less than a year ago, 1-2 years ago, more than 2 years ago)		-
Output	Number of volunteering opportunities created through funded projects	NA	Total number of volunteering opportunities created	-

Area	ToC indicator	MI indicator (record level)	MI indicator (aggregate per project)	Strand 1
Type of volunteering opportunity - length	NA	Type of volunteering opportunity (One-off / short-to-medium term / long term opportunity)	Number of volunteering opportunities created split by (One-off / short-to-medium term / long term opportunity)	-
Type of volunteering opportunity - sector	NA	Type of volunteering opportunity	Number of volunteering opportunities split by sector type	ACE – Note: all activities will be classed under Arts and Culture
Output	Number of people volunteering via funded projects	Total number of unique IDs per project for those project participants selected as volunteers	Total number of volunteers recruited	ACE - 6 monthly reporting template
Output	Number of people volunteering at least once a month via funded projects	Frequency of volunteering	Number of people volunteering regularly (at least once a month)	-
Output	Number of sharing learning / dissemination events	NA	Number of sharing learning / dissemination events	-
VfM -Project total spend	NA	NA	Total spent on project (split by activity level if possible)	ACE - 6 monthly reporting template

HE |
| **VfM - Project FTE staff time** | NA | NA | FTE staff time | ACE- 6 monthly reporting template |
| **VfM - Project spend on** | NA | NA | Amount spent on equipment or | ACE- 6 monthly |

Area	ToC indicator	MI indicator (record level)	MI indicator (aggregate per project)	Strand 1
equipment or facilities			facilities (including rent)	reporting template

2.1.1 Data Sharing Agreements

Delivery partners and grant making organisations on strands 1 and 2 will be required to share fully anonymised participant and beneficiary data for this evaluation. The MI data will be shared with NatCen from the following organisations: Arts Council England (ACE), Historic England (HE), and UK Community Foundations (UKCF). DCMS have reviewed the contracts associated with this fund and confirmed that appropriate data protection protocols are in place, and, that no additional data sharing agreements are necessary. The named organisations will be asked to share anonymised data relating to volunteers and project participants. ACE will need to onward share data collected from their three delivery partners with NatCen.

Data transfers between NatCen and delivery partner organisations will need to be carried out securely. We have an established File Transfer Protocol (FTP) to transfer data between NatCen and delivery partner organisations. This is a server hosted at NatCen, to which relevant delivery partner organisation staff will have password-controlled access and offers a convenient means of secure transmission of data.

In the grant agreements executed between grantees and delivery partners, it will be necessary to outline the processes for data collection and sharing required for monitoring and evaluation purposes and reporting at the aggregate level – i.e., between grantees, delivery partners and NatCen. In effect, grantees will have to be clear on, and agree to, the sharing of project participant data with NatCen.

3. OUTCOME LEVEL DATA (QUANT MEASURES)

With regard to the quantitative outcome data to be collected as part of project level evaluations, we propose evaluators use the following survey questions and scales listed below to ensure consistency across key outcome data when synthesising the data for this overarching programme evaluation. Annex A outlines the exact questions to be included and more details about which other approaches were considered and linked limitations.

- **UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA-LS)**: An established and tested scale, whose reliability and validity has been assessed and confirmed, that measures loneliness as a subjective, self-reported measure. This scale is widely used in the UK context. As suggested by the ONS, we have added a fourth question to the 3 included in the short version of the UCLA-LS. This question has the purpose of measuring in a more direct way how often participants feel lonely. We recognise however that there are some limitations to using this short question set, including the fact that the UCLA-LS' aim is to measure loneliness as a subjective experience which means that all the other dimensions that may influence and being influenced by loneliness itself are not directly considered. However, scales that measure all (or most) loneliness dimensions are usually quite long and would be impractical to apply. A further limitation is regarding the measurement of chronic loneliness, a key outcome area for this fund. There are currently no established measures that can be used to determine chronic loneliness. It has been suggested scales such as the UCLA-LS measure the frequency of loneliness, but it is unclear after how long this becomes chronic (some suggest 1 year)[2]. Their suggestion is to conduct focus groups and other qualitative work to explore loneliness severity/chronicity.

- **Community Life Survey (CLS)**: The CLS provides information on behaviours and attitudes within communities (including volunteering, charitable giving, community engagement, well-being and loneliness). We propose including three questions from the survey questionnaire which intend to measure the strength of the respondent's feeling of belonging to their immediate area, their satisfaction with this area, and their perception of the neighbourhood involvement in the improvement of this area. These three questions would allow to better understand how much the funding has increased social cohesion and pride in place of participants and volunteers. It is possible that KYN projects will not be able to influence pride in place given the focus on more individual level outcomes. This is a limitation that should be considered when reporting. We also recommend local evaluations explore this outcome qualitatively. Research questions could include 'what does pride in place mean to people in these high deprivation areas?' 'Which elements of belonging to a community/neighbourhood have the projects made a difference to for individuals (if any)?'

- **ONS Personal Well-being questions (ONS4)**: This 4-items questionnaire has been developed to measure personal well-being and has a tracked record of use in longitudinal studies to explore changes over time. The first two items intend to measure the general life satisfaction of the respondent and how worthwhile they perceive their daily activities. The two other items intend to measure happiness and anxiety in the day before the completion of the questionnaire.

- **Skills and confidence:** There are several challenges to the measurement of skill and confidence improvement (further details in annex C). The first of these challenges is that these

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[2] Tackling Loneliness Evidence Review https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-loneliness-evidence-review/tackling-loneliness-evidence-review-full-report#authors

concepts have very general definitions which usually apply to a wide range of different contexts. From a review of existing literature, the two concepts have not been operationalised into a small number of measurable variables (the same way well-being has, e.g., the ONS4). For example, the concept of *skill* can refer to life skills, soft skills, manual dexterity, cognitive skills, and so on. Each one of these examples of "skills in context" often presents a variable number of dimensions that need to be further operationalised to be measured.

- o **Skills:** A possible partial solution to quantitatively "measure" this outcome may be to use a general statement to record whether beneficiaries feel there has been any change in their skills (see table 5). However, this scale has not been tested, which is a major limitation. We would suggest using qualitative interviews to add further detail and depth to this outcome measure.

- o **Confidence**: this also refers to several dimensions, such as self-esteem (regard or respect a person has for oneself), self-efficacy (trust in your own abilities to complete a task or achieve a goal), self-concept (the way we think about ourselves, evaluate our appearance, thoughts, and behaviours), trust in people, and so on. Most of these concepts have been operationalised and measured using scales with at least 10 items. Given the limitations of all the possible quantitative approaches, our suggestion would be to rely more on a qualitative approach to explore the impact of the projects on skill and confidence improvement. However, a possible approach to measure participant's confidence and its changes over time may benefit from the use of a more contextualised definition (state-like confidence) which would help the participant by providing a temporal frame focused on their more recent activities. We have therefore developed a set of three questions (table 5) listed with a clearer definition of the type of *confidence* the projects are likely to help develop. However, it should be considered that this approach has its own limitations that must be taken into account.

Given the limitations outlined above with using consistent quantitative measures of skills and confidence in the context of such a varied portfolio of projects, we strongly suggest that any quantitative data would benefit from a parallel use of qualitative approaches.

Table 5 outlines more fully the expected data sources that will be used to collect data against each intermediate outcomes, outcome and impact area in the ToC, including any assumptions that will need to be made or limitations in measuring these indicators.

Table 5 – Survey questions and measures for the evaluation of impacts, intermediate outcomes and outcomes

ToC Indicator	Data source	Measure or Question and Response Format
Intermediate outcome: Increased number of volunteering opportunities in high deprivation local authorities	CMD Process evaluation	- Total number of volunteering opportunities created This data will be reported alongside qualitative data from the evaluation (interviews with grantees) on the extent to which volunteering opportunities were additional to what was available previously, new networks/systems established and sustainability of these opportunities.

Intermediate outcome: Increased number of opportunities for chronically lonely people in high deprivation areas to build social connections	CMD, application forms and project level evaluations	- Counts the 'Number of people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness reached through funded projects' only for those projects selecting loneliness as their focus area in UKCF / ACE grantee application. Data captured through project level evaluations
Intermediate outcome: Increase in proportion of people who regularly volunteer in the identified local authority areas	CMD	- Total number of volunteers recruited - Number of first-time volunteers - Number of people volunteering regularly (at least once a month)
Intermediate outcome (Strand 1): Increase in evidence on how, and to what extent, interventions in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in areas of high deprivation increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	Project level evaluation and process evaluation interviews with grantees and delivery partners
Intermediate outcome (Strand 2): Increase in evidence to identify scalable and/or sustainable place-based interventions that increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness	DCMS monitoring form Project level evaluations Process evaluation	DCMS quarterly monitoring form – number of project level evaluations using QED design Project level evaluation and process evaluation interviews with grantees and delivery partners
Outcome: People at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness have increased levels of social connection. **Impact: Reduced loneliness for people at risk of or experiencing chronic loneliness in identified high deprivation target areas.**	UCLA-LS - Project level evaluations	- How often do you feel that you lack companionship? (Hardly ever or never (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3)) - How often do you feel left out? (Hardly ever or never (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3)) - How often do you feel isolated from others? (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3))
	ONS / CLS - Project level evaluations	- How often do you feel lonely? (Often/always, Some of the time, Occasionally, Hardly ever, Never)
	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	- Qualitative interviews with volunteers and project participants

Outcome: Increased social cohesion and pride in place of participants and volunteers	CLS - Project level evaluations	- How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood? Please think of the area within a few minutes walking distance from your home. (1. Very strongly 2. Fairly strongly 3. Not very strongly 4. Not at all strongly) - Please think of the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? (1. Very strongly 2. Fairly strongly 3. Not very strongly 4. Not at all strongly) - To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in your neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood? (1. Very strongly 2. Fairly strongly 3. Not very strongly 4. Not at all strongly)
	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	- Qualitative interviews with volunteers and project participants

Outcome: Participants and volunteers improve their skills and/or confidence	n/a	Skills:
		
		• Which of the following skills have you used during the project?
		  ○ Problem solving (Yes/No)
		  ○ Working with others OR Team-working skills (Yes/No)
		  ○ Communication skills (Yes/No)
		  ○ Using your creativity (Yes/No)
		  ○ Taking on responsibility (Yes/No)
		• Thinking about the above, how much do you agree with the following statements?
		  ○ *I have developed my skills as a result of this project* (strongly agree / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?
		  ○ *I have made improvements to my local area as a result of the project* (strongly agree / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?
		  ○ *I have built connections with new people as a result of this project* (strongly agree / agree / neither

		agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?
		Confidence:
		▪ These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to work with other people? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*). ▪ These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to deal with problems? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*). ▪ These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to communicate with others? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*).
Outcome: Participants and volunteers have improved wellbeing	ONS4-Project level evaluations	- Life Satisfaction: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? (Answers on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely") - Worthwhile: Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile? (Answers on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely") - Happiness: Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? (Answers on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely") - Anxiety: On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	- Qualitative interviews with volunteers and project participants
	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	- Qualitative interviews with volunteers and project participants

Outcome: Local authorities and community organisations in high deprivation areas have access to evidence and lessons learned on approaches to increase regular volunteering and reduce chronic loneliness	Project level evaluations Process evaluation	- Identified through synthesis and analysis of evidence emerging from project level evaluations. - Process evaluation interviews with delivery partners and grantees
Impact: Scalable and sustainable approaches identified for high-deprivation levelling up areas to: Encourage volunteering; Tackle loneliness; Increase pride-in-place	Programme level evaluation – VfM Process evaluation	- Value for Money analysison scalability and sustainability. This is reliant on building on data available through the project level evaluations. -Process evaluation interviews with delivery partners and grantees
Impact: Development of social and physical infrastructure to support volunteering in identified high deprivation areas	Project level evaluations, Process evaluation	- Identified through synthesis and analysis of evidence emerging from the project level evaluations - Qualitative interviews with interviews with delivery partners and grantees

Appendix A: KYN Fund Proposed Measures (project level evaluations)

Recommended measures:

Loneliness

- ▪ **UCLA Loneliness Scale (UCLA-LS)**: An established and tested scale, whose reliability and validity have been assessed and confirmed, that measures loneliness as a subjective, self-reported measure.[3] The scale includes 20 items, however several shorter, simplified versions have been developed and tested.[4,5,6]
  - o <u>Inclusion rationale</u>: The UCLA-LS is an established scale for the measurement of subjective loneliness. The main advantage of such scale is that it "*provides a reliable and valid assessment of loneliness across a variety of populations and data-collection methods*".[7] The UCLA-LS has also been successfully used in previous longitudinal studies[8,9,10] to assess changes in time in subjective loneliness, which confirms its appropriateness for the general aims of the present evaluation. In order to reduce the workload on respondents, we suggest using the 3-items scale validated by Hughes and colleagues[11] with the addition of a fourth question (*How often do you feel lonely?*)[12] which more directly refers to loneliness. Alternatively, to explore more comprehensively the different dimensions of subjective loneliness, we suggest using one of the two 10-items scales (Form A or Form B) developed by Knight and colleagues.[13] In Tab. 1 we have listed all the 20 items included in the latest version of the UCLA-LS, and in Tab. 2 the questions we suggest to adopt for this evaluation with the response format. The answers to each item are associated to a specific value from 1 to 3. Higher scores indicate greater degrees of loneliness.
  - o <u>Limitations</u>: The UCLA-LS' aim is to measure loneliness as a subjective experience, this means that all the other dimensions that may influence and being influenced by loneliness itself are not directly considered. For example, the selected questions from the UCLA-LS do not measure loneliness in romantic, family, or friend relationships, which is measured by other scales such as the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA) and the Differential Loneliness Scale (DLS).[14] However, these scales are longer than the

[3] Russell, D.W. (1996) UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, Validity, and Factor Structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 66(1): 20-40.

[4] Hughes, M.E. et al. (2004) A Short Scale for Measuring Loneliness in Large Surveys. *Research on Aging*, 26(6): 655-672.

[5] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences; Board on Health Sciences Policy; Committee on the Health and Medical Dimensions of Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults. Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults: Opportunities for the Health Care System. Washington (DC): *National Academies Press* (US); 2020 Feb 27. 6, Assessment of Social Isolation and Loneliness in Research. Available from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557967/

[6] Elphinstone, B. (2018), Identification of a Suitable Short-form of the UCLA-Loneliness Scale. *Aust Psychol*, 53: 107-115. https://doi.org/10.1111/ap.12285

[7] Russell, 1996: 37.

[8] Hanratty, B. et al. (2018) Loneliness as a risk factor for care home admission in the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. *Age and Ageing*, 47: 896–900. DOI: 10.1093/ageing/afy095

[9] Domènech-Abella, J. et al. (2019) Anxiety, depression, loneliness and social network in the elderly: Longitudinal associations from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA). *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 246: 82-88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.12.043

[10] Martín-María, N. et al. (2020) Differential impact of transient and chronic loneliness on health status. A longitudinal study. *Psychology & Health*, 35(2): 177-195, DOI: 10.1080/08870446.2019.1632312

[11] Hughes et al., 2004.

[12] This question is recommended by the ONS and currently used in the Community Life Survey: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/measuringlonelinessguidancefor useofthenationalindicatorsonsurveys

[13] Knight et al. (1988) Some normative, reliability, and factor analytic data for the revised UCLA Loneliness Scale. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 44(2): 203-206.

[14] Maes, M. et al. (2022) How (Not) to Measure Loneliness: A Review of the Eight Most Commonly Used Scales. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, 19, 10816. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191710816

UCLA-LS (SELSA 37 items or 15 in its shorter version, and DLS 60 items or 20 in its shorter version). Moreover, this limitation will be mitigated by the inclusion of measures of wellbeing in the evaluation questionnaire which will capture the impact of loneliness on the general wellbeing of respondents, and by the exploration of different aspects of loneliness in the qualitative interviews. A further possible limitation is that the response format we suggest, in accordance with Hughes and colleagues, is a 3-point response format (*hardly ever*, *some of the time*, *often*). This format was proposed to further reduce the respondents' workload; however, its internal consistency was reported as slightly lower than the 4-point format (*never*, *rarely*, *sometimes*, *always*) of the 20-items UCLA-LS.

Table 1 – UCLA-LS items

Item	Knight et al.'s Forms
1) How often do you feel that you are "in tune" with the people around you?	A
2) How often do you feel that you lack companionship?	A
3) How often do you feel that there is no one you can turn to?	B
4) How often do you feel alone?	A
5) How often do you feel part of a group of friends?	B
6) How often do you feel that you have a lot in common with the people around you?	A
7) How often do you feel that you are no longer close to anyone?	A
8) How often do you feel that your interests and ideas are not shared by those around you?	A
9) How often do you feel outgoing and friendly?	B
10) How often do you feel close to people?	B
11) How often do you feel left out?	A
12) How often do you feel that your relationships with others are not meaningful?	B
13) How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?	B
14) How often do you feel isolated from others?	B
15) How often do you feel you can find companionship when you want it?	B
16) How often do you feel that there are people who really understand you?	A
17) How often do you feel shy?	B
18) How often do you feel that people are around you but not with you?	A
19) How often do you feel that there are people you can talk to?	A
20) Now often do you feel that there are people you can turn to?	B

Table 2 – Suggested items to measure general loneliness

Item	Response categories

1) How often do you feel that you lack companionship?	Hardly ever or never (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3)
2) How often do you feel left out?	Hardly ever or never (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3)
3) How often do you feel isolated from others?	Hardly ever or never (1), Some of the time (2), Often (3)
4) How often do you feel lonely?	Often/always, Some of the time, Occasionally, Hardly ever, Never

Wellbeing

There are two main options for measuring wellbeing. Based on our conversations during ToC workshops, we recommend the ONS4 measure which better matches outcomes linked to alleviating loneliness. However, we have provided details for both options below.

- **ONS Personal Well-being questions (ONS4)**: This 4-items questionnaire has been developed to measure personal well-being and has a tracked record of use in longitudinal studies to explore changes in time. The first two items intend to measure the general life satisfaction of the respondent and how worthwhile they perceive their daily activities. The two other items intend to measure happiness and anxiety in the day before the completion of the questionnaire.
    - Inclusion rationale: The ONS4 is an established measurement tool, and it was designed to capture different aspects of subjective well-being[15]. Because individuals tend to adjust their memories of pleasant or unpleasant events according to their present life or by focusing only on specific aspects that could change as time goes by,[16] the ONS4 anchors the measurement of happiness and anxiety to a defined and recent timeframe (yesterday).
    - Limitations: Qualitative evaluations of the ONS4 found that the main limitations were linked to the different ways in which some respondents assess and interpret each one of the four questions and to the social desirability bias, which led some to inflate their score of the "worthwhile" question.

Table 3 ONS4 measures of personal well-being

Measure	Question
Life Satisfaction	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
Worthwhile	Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
Happiness	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
Anxiety	On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

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[15] Oman, S. (2021) Discovering 'the New Science of Happiness' and Subjective Well-being. In: *Understanding Well-being Data. New Directions in Cultural Policy Research*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-72937-0_4

[16] Kahneman, D. & Krueger, A.B. (2006) Developments in the Measurement of Subjective Well-Being. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20(1): 3-24.

- **Short Warwick-Edinburgh Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS)**: The SWEMWBS is a short version of the Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). The WEMWBS was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing.[17] We are proposing to use the SWEMWBS scale as this is likely to prove less onerous, and save time for projects to collect meaningful data on individual wellbeing.
  - Inclusion rationale: The SWEMWBS focuses on functioning more than just feelings, this allows the exploration of well-being links to daily activities (e.g., *I've been dealing with problems well* or *I've been feeling useful*). Moreover, it includes an item dedicated to closeness to other people which would complement the section of the questionnaire on loneliness.
  - Limitations: The SWEMWBS has been used successfully in the assessment of changes to well-being over time. However, it was also found that the SWEMWBS is less sensitive to changes to mental health for those at the lower end of the well-being spectrum compared to those who are feeling less unwell.[18]

Table 4 The Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS)

Statement	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5

Pride in Place

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[17] https://www.corc.uk.net/outcome-experience-measures/short-warwick-edinburgh-mental-wellbeing-scale-swemws/

[18] Shah, N. et al. (2021) Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS): performance in a clinical sample in relation to PHQ-9 and GAD-7. *Health Qual Life Outcomes* 19, 260. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-021-01882-x

- **Community Life Survey (CLS)**: The CLS provides information on behaviours and attitudes within communities (including volunteering, charitable giving, community engagement, well-being and loneliness).
    - Inclusion rationale: We suggest including three questions from the survey questionnaire which intend to measure the strength of the respondent's feeling of belonging to their immediate area, their satisfaction with this area, and their perception of the neighbourhood involvement in the improvement of this area. These three questions would allow to better understand how much the funding has increased social cohesion and pride in place of participants and volunteers.
    - Limitations: Other dimensions of pride-in-place may not be captured by these three questions, but a longer questionnaire may increase too much the participants' workload.

Table 5 Proposed questions from CLS

Question 1.	How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood? Please think of the area within a few minutes walking distance from your home.
	1. Very strongly 2. Fairly strongly 3. Not very strongly 4. Not at all strongly
Question 2.	Please think of the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?
	1. Very satisfied 2. Fairly satisfied 3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 4. Fairly dissatisfied 5. Very dissatisfied
Question 3.	To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in your neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood?
	1. Definitely agree 2. Tend to agree 3. Tend to disagree 4. Definitely disagree 5. Nothing needs improving

Measurements of skill and confidence improvement

There are several challenges to the measurement of skill and confidence improvement. The first of these challenges is that these concepts have very general definitions which usually apply to a wide range of different contexts. From a review of existing literature, the two concepts have not been operationalised into a small number of measurable variables (the same way well-being has, e.g., the ONS4). For example, the concept of *skill* can refer to life skills, soft skills, manual dexterity, cognitive skills, and so on. Each one of these examples of "skills in context" often presents a variable number of dimensions that need to be further operationalised to be measured. For example, Subasree and Radhakrishnan Nair's attempt to create a comprehensive scale to measure life skills included 10 dimensions (Self-awareness, Empathy, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Decision Making, Problem Solving, Coping With Emotions, Coping with Stress) and a total of 100 items.[19] "*Looking at what people need in order to perform even very basic things in life soon makes clear that the list of skills that can possibly be measured is practically unlimited*",[20] and trying to offer a set of predefined questions may prove impractical and may fail to cover the whole extent of the project's impact

[19] Subasree, R., and Radhakrishnan Nair, A. (2014) The Life Skills Assessment Scale: the construction and validation of a new comprehensive scale for measuring Life Skills. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 19(1): 50-58.
[20] Allen, J. & van der Velden, R. (2005) The Role of Self-Assessment in Measuring Skills. *REFLEX Working paper 2*, March 2005.

on skills (i.e., a project may have offered an activity that aimed at improving more than one skill, such as manual dexterity and creative thinking). Other limitations arise from the self-assessment format required by this evaluation which increases the chance of measurement errors due to intentional manipulation of the answers (e.g., selecting the answer that is considered the most socially desirable) and unintentional discrepancies (e.g., participants interpreting the questions in ways that diverge from their original meaning, or having issues in associating a value to their skills level).[21] A possible partial solution to quantitatively "measure" this outcome may be to use a general statement to record whether beneficiaries feel there has been any change in their skills. However, this scale has not been tested, which is a major limitation. We would suggest using qualitative interviews to add further detail and depth to this outcome measure.

- Which of the following skills have you used during the project?
    - Problem solving (Yes/No)
    - Working with others OR Team-working skills (Yes/No)
    - Communication skills (Yes/No)
    - Using your creativity (Yes/No)
    - Taking on responsibility (Yes/No)
- Thinking about the above, how much do you agree with the following statements?
    - *I have developed my skills as a result of this project* (strongly agree / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?
    - *I have made improvements to my local area as a result of the project* (strongly agree / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?
    - *I have built connections with new people as a result of this project* (strongly agree / agree / neither agree nor disagree / disagree / strongly disagree)?

Regarding the concept of *confidence*, this also refers to several dimensions, such as self-esteem (regard or respect a person has for oneself), self-efficacy (trust in your own abilities to complete a task or achieve a goal), self-concept (the way we think about ourselves, evaluate our appearance, thoughts, and behaviours), trust in people, and so on. Most of these concepts have been operationalised and measured using scales with at least 10 items. However, if by *confidence* we are referring just to self-esteem in general terms, then it would be possible to use the Single-Item Self-Esteem Scale (SISE): respondents are asked to rate their agreement to the statement "I have high self-esteem" on a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 (not very true of me) to 5 (very true of me). To better consider if an appropriate measure for *confidence* would fit the aim of the present evaluation, we would benefit from a more accurate definition of this concept in this context. Firstly, *confidence* can be described as either a *personality* trait or an *ability* trait.[22] While the first is mainly linked to the totality of life experiences and people's ideas about themselves, the latter refers to someone's confidence in successfully completing specific tasks. The two traits are linked but they cannot be considered as interchangeable constructs. A further conceptualisation of *confidence* distinguishes between *state-like* and *trait-like* core confidence.[23] State-like confidence refers to one's confidence in their capacities in specific circumstances and moments, while trait-like confidence refers to one's idea of their abilities in general and in a broader temporal sense. The range of state-like core confidence is usually defined within the boundaries of trait-like confidence.

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Burns, K.M., Burns, N.R., and Ward, L. (2016) Confidence—More a Personality or Ability Trait? It Depends on How It Is Measured: A Comparison of Young and Older Adults. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7: 518. Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00518
[23] Stajkovic, A.D. (2006) Development of a Core Confidence–Higher Order Construct. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(6): 1208–1224

As noted, due to the complexity of the concepts of *skill* and *confidence*, and due to the large number of potential activities the projects may offer, we think that a one-size-fits-all solution may not add value to the evaluation and may not provide a reliable measurement of this outcome. *G*iven the limitations of all the possible quantitative approaches, our suggestion would be to rely more on a qualitative approach to explore the impact of the projects on skill and confidence improvement. However, a possible approach to measure participant's confidence and its changes over time may benefit from the use of a more contextualised definition (state-like confidence) which would help the participant by providing a temporal frame focused on their more recent activities.

- These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to work with other people? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*).
- These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to deal with problems? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*).
- These days, how confident do you feel about your ability to communicate with others? (Scale from 1 to 10 where 1 = *not confident at all* and 10 = *extremely confident*).

The questions listed above are examples that a clearer definition of *confidence* will help develop. However, it should be considered that this approach has its own limitations that must be taken into account, and – as suggested above – it would benefit from a parallel use of qualitative approaches.