

UKSPF in London: second annual delivery report for 2023-24

Overview

1. The £2.6 billion UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was established in April 2022 as a key feature of the last government's Levelling Up agenda. All areas of the UK received a three-year UKSPF allocation; and London's £144,444,970 allocation is the largest (comprising capital and revenue funding). It must be spent by 31 March 2025.
2. This is the second of three programme delivery reports. This report covers 2023-4. It describes progress on spending to March 2024, activities undertaken, achievements and challenges. The first report, issued in July 2023, provides background on the implementation of UKPSF.
3. There are references in this report to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). MHCLG – formerly known as the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities from 2021 until 9 July 2024 - is responsible for UKSPF.
4. All UKSPF funding has been committed to activity across London. This includes £78m allocated to the boroughs directly (£53m) and sub-regional partnerships (£25m) i.e. just over half of London's UKSPF allocation. The headline split of the funding¹:

Supporting Local Business	Communities and Place	People and Skills
£13m to boroughs for 111 sub-projects	£40m to boroughs to 178 sub-projects	£25m to sub-regional partnerships for 37 projects
£19m to London & Partners for 3 projects		£11m to 24 projects to support young people
£30m to 28 business support projects		

5. All boroughs, individual projects, sub-regional partnerships, and London & Partners' business support programmes are well underway across London. Appendix 1 provides a small selection of case studies of the targeted support being provided to small businesses and entrepreneurs to scale up and grow. They show how businesses are taking up the support on offer, that finance is being raised and that jobs are being created. Borough activity is well underway using funding from Communities and Place: from supporting households to reduce their bills, to encouraging the return of the natural habitats, to increasing opportunities for volunteering.
6. As will become evident in this report, the three-year timeframe for spending the £144m allocation is challenging, especially when taking into account the time required for the initial drafting of the programme's investment strategy and then awaiting MHCLG's sign-

¹ This excludes £4m ring-fenced for management and administration. Details can be found later in the report.

off, which was eventually given nine months after the launch. In reality, by the time the first UKSPF contract payments were made, about eighteen months' delivery remained. An extension to UKPSF beyond March 2025 would be an immediate solution, which is picked up at the end of this report, although any decisions of the new government are awaited.

Expenditure performance

7. MHCLG awards 'Lead Local Authorities' such as the GLA three annual payments over the course of the programme, as shown here:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF grant allocation from MHCLG	£17,529,729	£35,059,459	£91,855,782	£144,444,970

8. Despite the challenge of the short delivery timescale, by March 2024 London had contractually paid out 86% of its year 1 and 2 allocations. This is good progress, but it remains testing to spend the money in the remaining time, an issue felt across the country. The GLA is working closely with boroughs, sub-regional partnerships, and projects to ensure that the funding is used so that it is not returned to government at the end of the programme.
9. MHCLG colleagues themselves recognised the tight timeframe and allowed year 1 and 2 underspends to be carried over, across the UK. However, to chivvy Lead Local Authorities along, MHCLG announced that the year 3 payment would be determined by the level of money paid out in the first two years. The good news is that due to London's progress, the GLA received its full allocation of £91 million in June 2024. This table shows the three annual payments and progress on expenditure by March 2024:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF grant allocation from MHCLG	£17,529,729	£35,059,459	£91,855,782	£144,444,970
UKSPF paid out by the GLA to projects and boroughs	£1,922,537	£43,458,311	N/A	£45,380,848
Cumulative percentage paid out	11%	86%	31%	31%

10. Whilst the 86% achievement demonstrates good progress, it is just 31% of the overall programme target. But this both discounts the £38m ring-fenced for People and Skills activity solely in 2024-5 (details below) and that there remains a full year (2024-5) for projects to spend the funding. A breakdown of expenditure by investment priority is included later in this report.

11. Over summer 2024, officers are examining the Q1 2024-5 claims (submitted in mid-July). This will enable a stock-take of expenditure performance and for changes to projects' contracts to be promptly made where needed. If this exercise is left too late there is a risk that projects, and thereby the programme, will run out of delivery time.

Management and Administration (M&A)

12. MHCLG allows 4% of the programme's budget to be used for M&A; this covers staffing and delivery costs. In London it was decided to allocate more funding to projects, and instead budgeted that 2.8% of the programme's value covers M&A, which is £4,001,127.
13. Up to March 2024, £452,336 had been spent, which is 11.3%. This is lower than might be expected for the first two years of the programme. However, the team was in a unique position of continuing to be part-funded by the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) programmes until December 2023. Now that the ESIF programmes have concluded, the UKSPF team are fully funded by UKSPF, and expenditure will increase during 2024-5. Should it become apparent that M&A will remain unspent it may be transferred to successfully performing activity across the three investment priorities where there is confidence it can be spent in time.

Output and outcomes performance

14. The programme's targets and achievements to March 2024 are listed later in this report. As with expenditure performance, it will be a challenge to ensure all outputs and outcomes are delivered in the remaining time. However, as is common with grant delivery programmes such as this, we expect an increase in results as the programme heads towards closure. Projects themselves will not want to under-achieve.
15. The encouraging news is that concrete results are already being delivered. For example, under the Supporting Local Business investment priority, London and Partners has used its UKSPF funding to launch Grow London Local, with 1,836 businesses having been assisted to date, and reported to the GLA.
16. The performance tables later in the report are based on the targets in the UKSPF Investment Plan agreed in 2022. With activity fully under way, some projects have been re-profiling outputs and outcomes to later months to reflect actual delivery. There are some requests to reduce outputs and outcomes. Some projects are currently revising their forecasts and it is expected that these will impact the programme-level targets. Officers expect to be liaising with MHCLG to discuss revised programme targets later in the summer.
17. The next three sections focus on the three investment priorities: Supporting Local Business, Communities and Place and People and Skills.

Supporting Local Business (SLB)

18. £62 million has been allocated for supporting businesses, of which £13m is directly set aside for boroughs and £19m awarded to London and Partners. £30m is supporting a further 28

individual projects which are funded following an open call for proposals. Each of these is taken in turn, as follows:

London boroughs

19. The 32 boroughs and the City of London are currently delivering 111 individual sub-projects between them, the £13m having been shared between the boroughs in 2022. The borough-led projects include advice for start-ups, small business grants programmes, support for SMEs to innovate, opportunities for SMEs to form networks with other organisations, and support for green economy SMEs, and for supply chains.

28 open call projects

20. In early 2023 an open competitive bidding round closed which sought projects to provide business support. Local Partnership Sub-group members were consulted on the suite of ninety-nine applications, in April 2023. It resulted in 28 projects being funded. Projects are funded are under seven different themes – innovation, supplier-readiness, bridging the digital divide, growing the social economy, property advice service, low carbon, support fast-growing diverse founders and investment- readiness support for diverse founders. Several projects cover a number of these themes within their delivery. Information about the twenty-eight projects can be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/business-and-economy/support-your-business/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-supporting-local-business>

London and Partners

21. In addition to the 28 open call projects, London and Partners (L&P) is receiving funding for three projects, for a combined £19m. These are Grow London Local (£7m), Grow London Global (£9.5m) and Grow London Early Stage (£2.5m). These projects are seeking to help transform the business support ecosystem in London, including by providing a single front door for businesses to get the right support at the right time and in the right way. The open-call projects are also collaborating with L&P to enable this. Details about Grow London can be found here: <https://www.londonandpartners.com/>

Expenditure performance

22. Delivery is going well at this stage, with satisfactory performance. Again, this is based on a delayed start but with a years' worth of delivery still to be reported. Officers regularly attend events and workshops led by the projects (and learn about some excellent work happening across London), reporting back on projects' delivery on the ground and feedback from SME participants. Attending these events and workshops strengthens relationships between officers and projects. On a quarterly basis projects convene at City Hall to network and discuss performance.
23. The total SLB funding paid out by the GLA to boroughs, L&P and the 28 projects, up to March 2024:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF paid out	£337,597	£24,664,520	N/A	£25,002,117

24. Of the £62m 2022-5 SLB budget, £25m was contractually paid out by March 2024. This leaves 40% of the allocation to be spent in the final year of delivery. On paper this is a challenge and officers continue to monitor the performance of both projects and boroughs, as previously highlighted.

Outputs and outcomes performance

25. There has been a steady start to the outputs and outcomes being reported. Boroughs and projects, including L&P, provide forecasts to the GLA and as previously noted, a review will be conducted over summer 2024 to re-assess achievability by March 2025. There are some outputs and outcomes that have not been reported to date. However, officers are liaising with boroughs and projects, and we expect to see increased numbers reported.

UKPSF 'Intervention'	Output (OP) and outcome (OC)	Target (number)	Reported to March 2024	% of target achieved
E19	(OC10) – Number of organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support	250	10	4%
E19	(OC11) – Number of new to market products	50	2	4%
E19	(OC12) – Number of enterprises with improved productivity	250	0	0%
E19	*(OC14) – Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support	1%	0	-
E19	(OP11) – Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	300	65	22%
E19	(OP12) – Number of enterprises receiving grants	150	5	3%
E23	(OC01) – Jobs created as a result of support	100	135	135%
E23	(OC02) – Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	1,500	338	23%
E23	(OC15) – Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	400	244	61%
E23	(OC16) – Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	200	43	22%
E23	(OP11) – Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	2,100	4,869	232%
E23	(OP12) – Number of enterprises receiving grants	150	88	59%
E23	(OP13) – Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	1,500	954	64%
E23	(OP58) – Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	400	0	0%

E24	(OC01) – Jobs created as a result of support	600	0	0%
E24	(OC02) – Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	800	0	0%
E24	(OC16) – Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	100	0	0%
E24	(OC62) – Number of early stage enterprises which increase their revenue following support	400	0	0%
E24	(OP11) – Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	800	0	0%
E29	(OC01) – Jobs created as a result of support	100	0	0%
E29	(OC02) – Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	300	0	0%
E29	*(OC14) – Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support	1%	0	-
E29	(OC16) – Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	25	0	0%
E29	(OC17) – Premises with improved digital connectivity as a result of support	100	0	0%
E29	(OP11) – Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	400	107	27%
E29	(OP12) – Number of enterprises receiving grants	50	10	20%
E29	(OP14) – Number of decarbonisation plans developed as a result of support	250	55	22%
E30	(OC01) – Jobs created as a result of support	166	6	3%
E30	*(OC18) – Increased number of enterprises supported	10%	82	-
E30	(OP11) – Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	400	123	31%

* MHCLG updated its guidance and amended the unit of measurement from a percentage to a number. The Investment Plan targets were submitted as percentages, so this obscures the reporting.

Communities and Place (C&P)

26. Boroughs are delivering 178 projects between them under this investment priority which allows for both revenue and capital expenditure, the latter accounting for 69% of the £40m funding. All funding has been allocated to the boroughs based on a methodology established by London Councils in 2022. The allocations can be found here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/funding-and-innovation/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/ukspf-london-borough-allocations>

27. Some of the projects funded include improvements to high streets and public green spaces, such as parks and public footpaths (creating environments that are more attractive to communities to visit); some improve accessibility to public spaces. Projects are creating business hubs accessible to SMEs which provides space for businesses to grow; provide support to food banks in local communities; some offer energy efficiency advice to households and facilitate workshops in local communities and schools. Cost of living support is available including workshops which provide advice for combatting fuel poverty, alongside small grants to help with the cost of bills. Case study snapshots can be found at appendix 1.
28. Boroughs are delivering at pace. However, a key challenge for some boroughs has been the time required to procure contractors, especially for capital works. Inflationary pressures on capital investment has also impacted. This initially led to a slow start to delivery in some cases.
29. Officers attend borough engagement events and meet the beneficiaries of UKSPF. This provides a first-hand opportunity to monitor progress. London Councils facilitates quarterly borough network meetings with the GLA. These are well-attended and provide both officers and boroughs the opportunity to share best practice, showcase activity, and discuss performance.

Expenditure performance

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
UKSPF paid out to boroughs	£1,584,940	£15,867,814	N/A	£17,452,754

30. With a budget of £40m, more than half of the funding had still to be paid out at March 2024. With one full year of delivery remaining, the forecasts received from boroughs suggest they expect to complete their capital works and spend the remaining allocation before March 2025.

Outputs and outcomes performance

31. Due to the time taken to get projects off the ground, outputs and outcomes have been slow to be reported. However, the table below demonstrates that boroughs are delivering and are already exceeding some of the targets. Officers are liaising with boroughs and discussing project delivery plans to understand the estimated final deliverables. Again, as with SLB, officers intend to liaise with MHCLG in summer 2024 to discuss revised targets.

UKPSF 'Intervention'	Output (OP) and outcome (OC)	Target (number)	Reported to March 2024	% of target achieved
E1	(OC01) - Jobs created as a result of support	1,000	51	5%
E1	(OC02) - Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	1,000	22	2%

E1	(OP01) - Amount of commercial space completed or improved	50,000	3,015	6%
E1	(OP02) - Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	50	56	112%
E1	(OP03) - Amount of public realm created or improved	40,000	42,947	107%
E13	*(OC09) - Increased take up of energy efficiency measures	15%	508	-
E13	(OP09) - Number of households receiving support	1,500	4,019	268%
E13	(OP10) - Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	2,000	209	10%
E3	*(OC03) - Increased visitor numbers	15%	25,680	-
E3	*(OC04) - Increased use of cycleways or foot paths	10%	163	-
E3	(OP04) - Amount of green or blue space created or improved	25,000	87,314	349%
E3	(OP05) - Number of trees planted	20,000	1,648	8%
E4	*(OC05) - Improved perceived/experienced accessibility	20%	20	-
E4	*(OC06) - Improved perception of facilities/amenities	20%	758	-
E4	(OP06) - Number of Tourism, Culture or Heritage assets created or improved	100	24	24%
E6	*(OC07) - Increased footfall	15%	63,881	-
E6	(OP07) - Number of local events or activities supported	1,000	1,806	181%
E6	(OP08) - Number of volunteering opportunities supported	1,000	611	61%
E9	*(OC08) - Improved engagement numbers	10%	3,834	-
E9	(OP08) - Number of volunteering opportunities supported	500	3,233	647%

**MHCLG updated its guidance and amended the unit to report from a percentage to a number. The Investment Plan targets were submitted as percentages, so this obscures the reporting.*

People and Skills (P&S)

32. P&S formally reports to the Skills for Londoners Board rather than the Local Partnership Sub-Group. However, an update is included here for completeness.

33. In England, unlike the devolved nations, government stated that P&S activity was restricted to 2024-25 only, the final year of UKSPF. GLA, London Councils and other organisations lobbied the government to enable spend from 2022-23 in part because many existing European Social Fund (ESF)-backed skills projects ended in December 2023. We did not succeed, though a late decision by government in March 2023 to allow People & Skills activity (not funding) to commence from 2023-24 allowed the GLA to bring some activity forward, for example direct awards to Sub-Regional Partnerships.
34. £38m UKSPF is funding London employment and skills activity. £25m was awarded to London's four sub-regional partnerships in late 2023 to provide intensive and holistic employment support to over 7,000 economically inactive and unemployed people in their local areas. It focuses on supporting disadvantaged groups such as refugees, people with mental or physical disabilities. Almost 1,000 participants have been supported so far, of which 70% are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, and 20% have a disability or health condition.
35. The Mayor's UKSPF Support for Young Londoners Programme utilised the remainder of the funding. Following the launch of an open bidding round in Autumn 2023, funding was awarded to 24 projects, delivering support to over 8,000 young people across three programme strands:
 - Universal NEET – this strand works with young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), across all areas of London.
 - Targeted NEET – supports young people further from the labour market, experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage, including care leavers, young people who are homeless, involved in substance misuse and/or criminal activity, young carers, and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
 - Work Experience – provides quality work experience for students at risk of not being in education, employment or training
36. All the activities previously funded by ESF had to end by December 2023, and the amount of funding available for providers under UKSPF is significantly lower. Officers have worked with partners to agree the priorities for UKSPF People & Skills funding, seeking to invest funding where the most significant gaps have been identified, taking into account the ending of ESF, and the availability of mainstream funded provision such as the Adult Education Budget and other external programmes.
37. The one-year delivery timeframe for People & Skills is a significant challenge. Projects of this type and size would usually be funded for a minimum of two years. The last government did not commit to fund UKSPF (or a similar programme) beyond March 2025, and a decision from the new government is awaited.

Expenditure performance

38. Noting the short delivery timeframe, £2,801,714 has been spent to date; this is made up of NEET milestone payments upon signing grant agreements and sub-regional partnership delivery within the boroughs.

Outputs and outcomes performance

39. As funding only covers 2024-25 projects are just starting to deliver. No bespoke London outputs and outcomes have been reported to date. However:

- Employment support for economically inactive people: 587 unemployed or economically inactive participants have joined the programme to date, 167 have gone into job search or employment and 61 have reported increased employability to date.
- Courses including basic skills, life skills, career skills: 379 Participants have joined the programme to date, 133 have experienced reduced barriers to work since receiving support and 18 are now in employment or self-employment.

Forward look

40. All four sub-regional partnerships are in contract and delivering. The first full financial claims were received in April and delivery is on target. Twenty-four contracts were awarded to support young Londoners who are NEET, to provide work experience placements for young people at-risk of NEET in schools, and to fund extension of the Careers Hubs. These are now in delivery, but to date only milestone payments have been paid; the first financial claim is due in July. All projects will be closely monitored during the lifetime of the Programme to ensure programme targets can be achieved and funding is utilised.

Sharing success: communications

41. A communications strategy is in place for raising awareness of UKSPF activity across London; and the socio-economic impact it is having. Case study material is being collated from projects with the aim to begin publishing these from the autumn, making use of the GLA's (and partners) communication channels. Whilst this report does not include details of all the excellent activity across London, a small suite of case studies can be found at Appendix 1.

Equalities monitoring

42. Although there are no programme-level targets for equalities representation, data is nevertheless captured for some of the outputs and outcomes for both SLB and C&P activity. This data is submitted by boroughs, L&P and SLB projects on a quarterly basis. This report highlights some of the key data to date. In some cases, particularly boroughs, some data has not yet been provided, but it is expected. This means the data presented here is not fully representative of actual delivery.

43. Having said this, based on the existing data available below, it is notable that projects reporting against OP11 (businesses receiving support) and OP13 (supporting potential entrepreneurs) have supported a higher number of female-led enterprises than the percentage of the working-age population in London (49.5% female – ONS Annual Population Survey 2023). This picture may change once a full set of data is available.

44. It is a mixed performance, so far, for other outputs (OP09 and OP08). A high percentage of 'prefer not to say' is also noted, which officers are raising with projects and boroughs to ensure a greater number of beneficiaries feel comfortable in making declarations.
45. In addition to the statistics below (where some figures have been rounded), data is also being captured for jobs created and jobs safeguarded, the sector(s) in which the job(s) have been created or safeguarded, and whether the job is a green job. This data will be available in the next annual report. The London population data below is sourced from the ONS Annual Population Survey 2023.

Supporting Local Business – for boroughs, L&P and SLB projects:

Output OP11 - Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support (i.e. advice and guidance)

Gender	Number	Percentage	London population
Male	1355.5	34%	50.5%
Female	2120.5	53%	49.5%
Other	25	1%	-
Prefer not to say	469	12%	-
Age	Number	Percentage	London population
16-24	58	2%	15%
25-29	168	5%	11.7%
30-34	312	8%	14.6%
35-39	380	10%	12%
40-44	492	13%	12.4%
45-49	366	10%	9.3%
50-54	328	9%	9.8%
55-59	271	7%	8.1%
60-64	161	4%	7.1%
65-plus	83	2%	*
Prefer not to say	1063	29%	-
Disabled	Number	Percentage	London population
Yes	263	7%	18.2%
No	2519.5	70%	81.8%
Prefer not to Say	832.5	23%	-
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage	London population
Asian or Asian British	563.7	16%	20.3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	692.1	19%	11.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	240.6	7%	3.7%
White	1048.4	29%	57.9%
Other ethnic group	194.2	5%	6.8%

Prefer not to say	826	23%	-
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* A comparative figure is not included as it would include all people aged 65 and over. The ONS bases its figures on the 16-64 age group.

Output OP13 - Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready (i.e. get ready to start a business)

Gender	Number	Percentage	London population
Male	243	25%	50.5%
Female	594	61%	49.5%
Other	9	1%	-
Prefer not to say	129	13%	-
Age	Number	Percentage	London population
16-24	64	7%	15%
25-29	86	9%	11.7%
30-34	88	9%	14.6%
35-39	100	11%	12%
40-44	89	9%	12.4%
45-49	100	11%	9.3%
50-54	81	9%	9.8%
55-59	65	7%	8.1%
60-64	41	4%	7.1%
65-plus	18	2%	*
Prefer not to say	218	23%	-
Disabled	Number	Percentage	London population
Yes	150	16%	18.2%
No	634	66%	81.8%
Prefer not to Say	183	19%	-
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage	London population
Asian or Asian British	147	15%	20.3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	221	23%	11.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	72	8%	3.7%
White	183	19%	57.9%
Other ethnic group	126	13%	6.8%
Prefer not to say	202	21%	-

* A comparative figure is not included as it would include all people aged 65 and over. The ONS bases its figures on the 16-64 age group.

Communities and Place

Output OP09 - Number of households receiving support

Gender	Number	Percentage	London population
Male	466	21%	50.5%
Female	677	31%	49.5%
Other	11	1%	-
Prefer not to say	1015	47%	-
Age	Number	Percentage	London population
16-24	120	5%	15%
25-29	135	6%	11.7%
30-34	146	6%	14.6%
35-39	209	9%	12%
40-44	232	10%	12.4%
45-49	191	8%	9.3%
50-54	166	7%	9.8%
55-59	119	5%	8.1%
60-64	92	4%	7.1%
65-plus	282	12%	*
Prefer not to say	598	26%	-
Disabled	Number	Percentage	London population
Yes	1626	49%	18.2%
No	920	28%	81.8%
Prefer not to Say	791	24%	-
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage	London population
Asian or Asian British	356	16%	20.3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	419	18%	11.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	91	4%	3.7%
White	458	20%	57.9%
Other ethnic group	216	10%	6.8%
Prefer not to say	731	32%	-

* A comparative figure is not included as it would include all people aged 65 and over. The ONS bases its figures on the 16-64 age group.

Output OP08 - Number of volunteering opportunities supported

Gender	Number	Percentage	London population
Male	707	25%	50.5%
Female	1124	40%	49.5%
Other	13	0%	-
Prefer not to say	999	35%	-
Age	Number	Percentage	London population
16-24	334	16%	15%
25-29	62	3%	11.7%
30-34	64	3%	14.6%
35-39	124	6%	12%
40-44	77	4%	12.4%
45-49	72	3%	9.3%
50-54	63	3%	9.8%
55-59	69	3%	8.1%
60-64	78	4%	7.1%
65-plus	170	8%	*
Prefer not to say	995	47%	-
Disabled	Number	Percentage	London population
Yes	337	12%	18.2%
No	1274	46%	81.8%
Prefer not to Say	1159	42%	-
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage	London population
Asian or Asian British	439	16%	20.3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	301	11%	11.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	135	5%	3.7%
White	737	26%	57.9%
Other ethnic group	118	4%	6.8%
Prefer not to say	1093	39%	-

* A comparative figure is not included as it would include all people aged 65 and over. The ONS bases its figures on the 16-64 age group.

Managing under-performance

46. All grant recipients are expected to have arrangements in place to meet the requirements set out in their grant funding agreements with the GLA. This includes having the capacity and capability to deliver contracted expenditure, outputs and outcomes targets.
47. Where projects fail to deliver contractual requirements, or where officers consider it is unlikely, UKSPF grant may be reduced. Through regular management and monitoring these projects are identified. To support officers, a performance strategy and process has been developed. Following the submission of the Q1 2024-5 claims in July 2024, there may be formal performance meetings with some projects, leading to an agreed recovery plan. Failure to complete the recovery actions will trigger a decision on the next steps, which could include a reduction in grant.

Evaluation

48. Under the last government, MHCLG announced it would be conducting a 5–10-year evaluation of UKSPF. The GLA is contributing to this. MHCLG also encourages local areas such as London not to replicate the national strategy but to undertake their own ‘light-touch’ evaluations, and to gauge local impacts where feasible. The GLA will shortly be embarking on its own evaluation, noting the risk that any evaluation could not prove worthwhile, nor provide an adequate review of this short programme.
49. Officers are nevertheless keen to review whether London’s approach and model for dispersing UKSPF funds has worked or not, and if it can be done more effectively next time. Due to their uniqueness, we expect each of the three investment priorities to be evaluated separately, and also together (in terms of how the GLA and its partners approached their set up). The evaluation process itself will not seek to burden projects and boroughs with additional reporting, which could detract from delivery.

Funding after April 2025

50. In March 2025 UKSPF could end as planned, or it could be extended, or a bridging fund might be introduced ahead of any new fund. We understand civil servants were planning to recommend a one-year extension prior to the general election. Officers continue to work closely with London Councils’ colleagues; and are engaging with other lead authorities across the UK, both formally and informally, to discuss common messaging, including as part of the UKSPF Advisory Forum facilitated by MHCLG. Lead Authorities across the UK will also be making representations to the new government.

Conclusion

51. This first annual report in 2023 set out how UKSPF was implemented and described the progress made in committing funding. This second report has highlighted the progress made to date in terms of expenditure, outputs and outcomes. Whilst good progress has been made, there is a long way to go in limited time. The onus right now is on projects and boroughs to spend and deliver. The GLA’s role has transitioned from implementation to performance monitoring, and it will soon move to closure. The greatest challenge remains

ensuring that not only performance targets are realised, but that the funding has a positive impact on those Londoners who have benefited from the programme.

Economic Development and Programmes
Greater London Authority
July 2024

Appendix

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund case studies

Appendix 1 – UK Shared Prosperity Fund case studies

A small selection of some of the organisations and beneficiaries that have benefited from UKSPF funding:

Title: LONDON E-Business Support Programme

Delivered by Enterprise Enfield / Business for London

UKSPF award: £2,858,421

The pandemic heralded a new way of working and greatly accelerated the shift towards digital transformation. However, many SMEs in London do not have the capability to digitally transition their businesses and, consequently, many are struggling to survive.

Enterprise Enfield was awarded UKSPF funding to deliver the LONDON E-Business Support Programme. The purpose is to support London's small business owners to better use digital technology, enhance their online presence; attract more customers; increase sales and improve the efficiency of their business operations. The programme is delivered through Business for London, a pan-London consortium of seven business support organisations operating across the capital.



Dave and Helen Paul -Founders of UGN / Jamz Radio Station

By the end of June 2024, 463 SMEs had received business support by Digital Experts with a further 280 SMEs registered.

The programme is supporting SMEs to enhance their digital skills and knowledge – which will boost business performance, increase sales, and enhance business resilience and economic sustainability. Additionally, this will safeguard existing jobs and create new jobs.

Dave & Helen Paul - Founders of UGN Media/Jamz Radio Station. *“The business support provided by the Digital Expert together with attendance at the live webinars has inspired us to develop a marketing campaign. Developing our skills and knowledge of digital tools, we have enhanced and updated our website using SEO, increased reach on our You Tube social media channel, created personalised videos for our presenters, and ordered promotional items printed with our QR code.”*

Title: Ascend Programme

Delivered by: Foundervine

UKSPF award: £748,000

The Ascend Programme, delivered by Foundervine, supports underrepresented founders — including women, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups — in securing investment and achieving growth. This 12-week programme addresses the significant challenges in obtaining funding by providing business and funding advice, investment relationship brokerage, tailored mentorship, and post-programme aftercare.

By offering customised support, expert mentorship, and direct investor connections, the programme helps founders overcome systemic funding barriers and scale their businesses. Its focus on diversity and inclusion makes it a unique and impactful initiative within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



The Ascend Programme has significantly improved the lives of Londoners by empowering underrepresented founders to build and grow successful businesses. This initiative contributes to economic growth and community development, with the expansion of small businesses leading to job creation within the community.

Faraan Irfan, Founder of Saarey Music, won the People's Choice Award at the Ascend demo day for the best pitch, as voted by the audience. Connected with dedicated investors, he has now raised 43% (£1.3 million) of his current £3 million funding round.

When asked about the benefits of the programme, Faraan stated *“What was most available for us, is the fact that we were able to connect with investors, learn from investors, what resonates with them, what’s the best way to articulate our message and our story in a way that will resonate with them to get the investment we need to grow”*.

Title: Empower100

Delivered by: Virgin Start Up

UKSPF award: £558,178

Empower100 supports diverse founders with growth potential to scale and finance their businesses successfully. The programme aims to tackle the distinct challenges faced by London's female, ethnic minority, and disabled entrepreneurs in scaling their businesses and securing necessary funding. These groups often encounter interconnected barriers such as limited access to finance, professional networks, and balancing business with family responsibilities.

The 8-week accelerator programme includes training modules, networking, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning, and a Demo Day event. By empowering 100 diverse founders, the programme aims to build their resilience, confidence, and capabilities, ensuring financial sustainability.

The programme is being delivered by Virgin StartUp which is a not-for-profit organisation that exists to help founders in the UK start and scale early-stage businesses.

UKSPF funding has enabled Virgin Start Up to run a high quality, high impact programme, that we would not otherwise be able to run. The funding also enables the programme to be free at the point of access, which is particularly important when attracting founders that are underrepresented and already face additional barriers.

Between July 2023 and April 2024, we have successfully supported 47 founders through the Empower100 programme, many of whom have gone on to create jobs and / or raise follow on funding, demonstrating our tangible impact on economic growth.

One of the SME participants Varun Bhanot (Magic AI – who have raised £2m in funding and created 1.5 jobs) said *"Empower100 has been instrumental in our growth journey. The support and resources provided have enabled us to scale effectively and make a significant impact in our industry."*



Magiċ AI team

Title: Southwark Climate Collective**Delivered by Better Bankside BID****UKSPF award: £653,775**

Led by Better Bankside BID, the Southwark Climate Collective is a partnership including Southwark Council, Team London Bridge, The Blue Bermondsey and Elephant and Castle Business Forum.

In 2023, the BID was awarded £653,775 UKSPF funding to deliver a bespoke support programme designed to enable and empower SMEs across the borough to take action on climate change.

Most SMEs are aware of the economic and climate benefits of decarbonising, and are enthusiastic about becoming more sustainable, but lack the time, skills and resources to identify impactful actions and implement changes.



The Southwark Climate Collective sets out to address these challenges, through a free 12-month programme comprising audits, tailored recommendations, and a community-focused approach to decarbonisation, featuring networking events and expert-led workshops designed to support knowledge-exchange, ideas generation and skills development.

The initiative has clearly resonated with businesses across the borough. After launching the programme in October, within just four months 160 Southwark SMEs had signed up, with more on the waiting list.

Businesses taking part in the programme are tasked with decarbonising one of four areas of their business operations: energy, freight, waste or supply chains. Across these four “workstreams”, a total of 117 audits have taken place to date, with more to be delivered over coming months.

Whilst many of the measures recommended to businesses relate to behaviour change and come at low or no cost, others require some level of investment. These range from investment in cargo bikes to the installation of LED lighting, solar panels and heat pumps. Better Bankside is leveraging its network to identify further funding sources that can support Southwark Climate Collective businesses on their journeys to net zero.

“The work done and audits conducted on our bakery have allowed us to deep dive into where we’re using energy, throughout our processes and within our facility and look at how we can reduce our carbon footprint, ultimately reducing pollution, and unnecessary use of energy, which is not only great for our environment, but helps us spend less on fuel use.” – Alexander West, Operations Director and co-Founder, The Gluten Free Bakery.

Title: Mapping and promotion of Black-owned businesses**Delivered by Black Owned London****UKSPF award: £75,000**

Black Owned London received £25,000 of the £75,000 UKSPF award from LB Camden as part of the borough's Supporting Local Business allocation. It is an empowering platform with a clear mission to amplify the narratives of Black professionals and businesses in order to drive impactful business activities within the Black community and among allies in London and across the UK.

Our primary goal is to address the challenges faced by Black businesses from multiple perspectives, such as client-to-business, business-to-business, and business-to institution relationships.

To fulfil this vision, we have developed a suite of dynamic solutions that includes launching a podcast series, establishing a Black-owned marketplace, and creating an online platform for fostering knowledge and community. Their flagship initiative, the podcast series, emphasises the significance of representation and delivers impactful stories. Our aim is to bring local stories to life while focusing on providing actionable solutions that can guide our listeners in realising their own aspirations. Seeking to expand our impactful initiatives, they applied for funding to build on the successful work we had undertaken with Camden during their black history season. This funding has been pivotal in enabling us to provide a voice to local Black business heroes, serving as beacons of hope for aspiring entrepreneurs.



In terms of achievements: BOLOfest, their Black-Owned Marketplace, became the largest black-owned market in Camden in its first year, welcoming 14,000 visitors over one weekend. It kicked off the Camden Black History season with the participation of 36 local organisations and 40 businesses. In 2024 they aim to have 100 businesses involved and extend the event to a week-long celebration with business masterclasses to support the local community. GO BOLO will manage our business markets, community music events, fund management, and collaborative mentorship schemes. It is a multifaceted platform that will process all this activity into data-driven action points to help local government and institutions better serve startup black entrepreneurs.

Kwame Amaning (Founder) of Abura London *"The networking opportunities offered by working at the podcast finals were enlightening for our business exposure and the ability to mix with groundbreaking entrepreneurs. Since working with BOLO, we have forged new commercial partnerships and changed how we approach business."*

Snapshots of borough activity:

RB Greenwich

Communities and Place allocation: £1,392,100

Supporting Local Business allocation: £451,003

A small selection of the activity underway:

Autumn Night Lights:



This project is part of an outreach and inclusion events programme. It comprises a series of ten events celebrating autumn and light festivals from across the world, including Harvest, Moon Festival, Diwali, Hannukah and Bonfire Night. The project aims to improve public realm in areas across Greenwich and instil pride in place.

Love Your Loft:



The project is focussed on households receiving support and increasing the take-up of energy efficiency measures. It is helping homeowners in deprived areas and acts as an introduction to retrofitting.

SELCE (South-East London Community Energy) has been commissioned to deliver the project.

LB Harrow

Communities and Place: £1,071,063

Supporting Local Businesses: £346,995

A small selection of the activity underway:

Support to Parks and Open Spaces:



The project sees joint work between volunteers, park user groups and council park teams. There are habitat-focused activities, including control of invasive non-native species and notifiable weeds, wetland management and woodland improvement.

A Nature Recovery Ranger has been recruited to collaborate with key stakeholders - Harrow Nature Conservation Forum, Harrow Parks

Forum and park user groups. Over 69,000 square metres of green space has been improved

Streamside Open Space:



Late last year, the Nature Recovery Ranger led a team of seven local volunteers, recruited with the help of the Friends of Streamside Open Space

The project has helped to manage the encroachment of brambles on the banks of the Yeading Brook and cleared a dense patch of bramble to allow a view of the river from the public footpath. This allows an increase in the amount of light reaching the stream and its inhabitants.



The bottom image shows the results after the stream clearance.

Support to the Voluntary Sector:

A first round of the Community Grants Fund has been launched, and six park-user groups were successful (Friends of Canons Park & Shaw Trust (see image), Harrow Recreation Ground Users Groups, Friends of Kenton Recreation Ground, Friends of Headstone Manor Recreation Ground, Friends of Stanmore Marsh and Friends of West Harrow Park.).

Saturday Open Days are held for residents and families where they can learn how to plant, sow seeds, arrange flowers, and litter picking devices are loaned out.

There is a tree Labelling project at Harrow Recreational Ground with support from the Royal

Horticultural Society. Seed-sowing activities are also available at Brockley Hill Open Space.

400 volunteering opportunities have been created so far (the target is 1,450), with most people aged over 50.

LB Barking and Dagenham

Communities and Place: £1,384,758
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Supporting Local Businesses: £435,340
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A small selection of the activity underway:

Youth participation and volunteering:

Two projects are aimed at increasing youth participation and volunteering. First, creating a campaign budget for the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum: a democratically elected group of young people who live, work or are educated in the borough. Each year the Youth Forum leads on social action campaigns to enhance the lives of local young people.

Secondly, a project delivering a Social Enterprise Programme in schools across Barking and Dagenham to enable young people to create a real-life social enterprise which tackles a social or environmental issue important to them. They are supported as they reflect on their local community and what they want to change before developing an enterprise idea to make this happen. The programme involves a Dragons' Den where teams get advice and support from local experts, as well as an awards ceremony at the end of the year bringing together schools across London.

Localities:



UKSPF is supporting a 'Localities' programme of support to help local people. It connects residents to support that will help them to help themselves as part of a preventative model tackling the cost-of-living crisis.

This work is being done alongside other projects to support residents in the face of the cost of living crisis, including looking to improve the energy efficiency of homes via a retrofit project. Residents receive support with a range of issues, and those eligible are referred to the Council's Cosy Homes programme.