



Report back to YFN

1. Name of your organisation and date funded by YFN:

Rural Urban Synthesis Society, funded Spring 2015

2. What does your organisation do?

RUSS is a [Community Land Trust](#) based in London.

We are a non profit community based organisation run by volunteers.

[Our mission](#) is to reduce our communities dependency on fossil fuels, increase food security, increase biodiversity and provide affordable housing for the community.

In particular, RUSS has created a [proposal](#) for a self-build co-housing community on Lewisham Council land. We aim to build 33 self build homes at Church Grove in Lewisham.

3. Can you describe/measure the impact that the specific YFN funded project/work has had?

Lewisham Council invited us to apply for a lease for derelict council land under a 'competitive tender', which means we had to compete with an established housing association for the right to use the land. We wanted to demonstrate how we are a community-led, self build housing developer, different to other property developers in London.

We used the funding to hold a number of workshops across Lewisham. The funding was mainly used for hiring out venues for a day, with some minor costs for colour printing and refreshments for local residents and RUSS members interested in developing the concepts of the Church Grove build scheme. These workshops were led by our Project Manager Emma Gittus, our architects Sam Brown and Jon Broome, as well as many individual sessions led by our volunteers including our founder and Chair Kareem Dayes and our Secretary Anne Kennedy. We also invited speakers from other housing projects, such as East London Community Land Trust and Sanford Housing Co-op.

The funding created an immense amount of change, as these workshops and the ideas they generated were the basis for our application to the Lewisham Council competitive tender. We won the competitive tender and have now been declared preferred bidder for the Church Grove site. This demonstrates evidence of the success of the funded project.

Thank you once again to YFN for funding our project at such a crucial stage.

4. Could you give us an estimate of how many people have been reached by the YFN funded project/work and by how much?

Over all the workshops approximately 100 people were reached. 50 people were very engaged in the workshops and funded project as their contributions to the development of the Church Grove competitive tender bid were invaluable.

5. Can you tell us any personal stories to highlight the value of funding from YFN?

I am personally applying for a home at the Church Grove development and would like to be a self builder on the site, so I can personally thank YFN for funding an inspirational project and directly helping me escape the London housing crisis.