

PRESS RELEASE

3rd December 2025
For Immediate Release

Lewisham Changemakers Programme Empowers Local Residents to Turn Ideas into positive change.

Facework Group CIC has announced the latest cohort of its pioneering *Lewisham Changemakers* programme which supports residents to develop community-led projects that tackle real needs.

Designed for local residents who want to make a difference but need support, the programme helps residents “*stay close to the real need,*” test ideas, build confidence, and develop the practical skills required to launch sustainable social enterprises. Participants receive mentoring, skills training, peer support and opportunities to pitch their work to partners and potential funders.

Now in its 7th year, many past Changemaker projects have already had meaningful impact across Lewisham, from wellbeing programmes and youth initiatives to community food, safety and health projects. Indeed, since completing the programme, previous Changemakers have collectively attracted **over £650,000 in additional investment**, validating the creativity and determination emerging from local communities.

But the program’s greatest impact goes beyond funding. As Stephen Carrick-Davies the CEO of Facework says, *“These are everyday leaders who see something broken or missing in their communities and chose to act, to reach out to their neighbours and create new grass-roots programmes across Lewisham. Yes, we have helped these projects secure further funding, but the greatest change is the change that takes place in an individual, when they see and believe that each of us has a role to play in improving our community.”*

In a time when communities in cities all around the world are feeling isolated or unsure of the future, the Lewisham Changemakers Programme is quietly proving that hope is not abstract, it is built by people who with help, turn personal challenges, lived experience and community pride into positive authentic local change.

The programme gives residents not just skills and mentoring and event and workspace, but also belief: The sense that ordinary people can reshape their neighbourhoods with small, consistent acts of care. At a moment when many are searching for reasons to stay hopeful, Lewisham’s Changemakers are showing what’s possible when we invest in each other and dare to believe we can be the change we want to see.

Brenda Dacres OBE, Lewisham’s Mayor says,

“Every year I look forward to coming to the Lewisham Changemakers pitch night to cheer on Lewisham residents who are developing exciting, positive change projects. I am particularly thrilled to see the progress previous Changemakers have made since they graduated, and the fact that they have been able to attract ongoing funding is a wonderful legacy of this programme.”

FUNDERS

And how is this all funded? Not by the usual top-down funding, but rather through a coalition of local organisations who recognise that they can be part of growing this movement. Housing Associations, Charities and departments within the local council and businesses such as Blue Garage, which is hosting the Changemakers celebration.

“Michael Korn, CEO of Blue Garage says, *“Blue Garage exists to lower the barriers for people who are passionate about turning their ideas into real products. We provide shared tools, workspace and practical mentoring to help founders move from concept to making something tangible. Working with Facework means we can extend that support to more social entrepreneurs, giving local people the ideal environment to grow their businesses. Lewisham is full of talent and ambition and with the right space and support we can help unlock their potential.”*

Another business supporting the Changemakers programme is 4i Solutions part of the Baily Garner group. Emma Quash from the company writes, *“We’ve been honoured to offer our ongoing support to this community initiative and remain inspired by the ambitions and energy of the current cohort. We are excited to support them in celebration of their hard work and thank Stephen and the team for the opportunity to be involved.”*

Other quotes from past Changemakers who have gone on to grow social enterprises from previous Changemaker courses.

Queen Joan, Queens Walking Group

“Before Changemakers, I knew my community needed support, but I didn’t always feel confident leading that change. The programme gave me the belief, structure and sisterhood I didn’t know I was missing. Today, our work is improving health, connection and confidence across Lewisham, proof that when local people are trusted, we rise.”

Sam Dias, Women’s Heart Strong

“Changemakers reignited something in me. After 45 years away from education, I arrived with a fragile idea... You saw possibility where I saw doubt, and hope became action. It’s more than a programme; it delivers what equalities legislation promises, opportunity, dignity, and flexibility.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

CHANGEMAKERS celebration and community ‘Pitch night’ – Thursday 4th December at Blue Garage Innovation hub, central Lewisham see <https://www.bluegarage.org/>

Over 200 local people, funders and changemakers together to cheer on the latest cohort and support grass-roots local projects. 6.30pm – live streamed on Facework Youtube channel.

For interviews, partnerships or programme enquiries, contact:
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See the full list of Changemaker projects at www.face.work/changemakers

ABOUT FACEWORK

Facework is an award-winning, Lewisham based social enterprise. For over 10 years the organisation has pioneered people-centered training and community programmes that help residents, particularly young people, refugees and disadvantaged groups, gain soft skills, confidence and access to meaningful employment. Full details at www.face.work

FUNDERS/SUPPORTERS



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