**Connecting Boroughs Framework for Assessing Beneficiary Eligibility and Needs**

## 1. Introduction

Connecting Boroughs is a volunteer-led charity dedicated to supporting vulnerable groups, including[1] single parent families, domestic violence survivors, and refugees, by ensuring they receive tailored support based on their unique needs. This framework outlines our systematic approach to identifying eligible beneficiaries and assessing their specific needs to provide effective, individualized support.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

The following criteria determine a potential beneficiary's eligibility:

- **Residency**: Applicants must reside within the operational areas of Connecting Boroughs (i.e. the London area).
- **Vulnerability**: Beneficiaries should fall into at least one or more of the following groups (and as a result will usually be facing socio-economic hardship, seeking a safe environment and support, and/or requiring assistance in rebuilding their lives):[2]
    - Single parent families.
    - Survivors of domestic violence.
    - Refugees and asylum seekers.
    - People on low incomes.
- **Alignment with Mission**: Individuals must require support that aligns with Connecting Boroughs' mission, as set out in our charity constitution.

## 3. Needs Assessment Process

The needs assessment process begins once eligibility is confirmed. This structured process evaluates each beneficiary's situation to develop a personalized support plan.

### 3.1 Initial Contact and Screening:

- Initial contact can be self-referral or referral through external agencies.
- The screening process involves collecting preliminary information to verify eligibility and identify the primary needs of the individual.

[1] **Note to Queeny**: We have made these changes to be consistent with the wording in the Safeguarding Policy.
[2] **Note to Queeny**: We have made these changes to be consistent with the wording of the charity objects in the constitution and the wording of the application that was submitted to the CC.

**3.2 In-depth Needs Assessment**:

- Conducted by a trained member of staff or volunteer, this assessment involves a structured interview or assessment form to understand the beneficiary's challenges.
- Key focus areas include:
    - **Housing**: Assessing safety, stability, and access to secure accommodation.
    - **Safety**: Identifying any immediate risks, such as threats from abusive relationships.
    - **Mental Health**: Evaluating emotional well-being and any need for psychological support.
    - **Financial Stability**: Assessing income, employment, or welfare needs.
    - **Access to Resources**: Identifying gaps in access to healthcare, education, and social services.

**4. Support Plan Creation**

A tailored support plan is created based on the assessment outcomes to ensure the beneficiary's needs are addressed effectively.

- **Specific Interventions**: Based on the assessment, the support plan may include:
    - **Referrals** to mental health professionals, legal advisors, or social services.
    - **Practical Assistance** for urgent needs, such as temporary shelter, food support, or emergency financial aid.
- **Collaborative Approach**: Where applicable, support plans are developed in collaboration with external agencies to provide comprehensive, multi-faceted support.
- **Goal Setting**: Specific, measurable goals are established to track the beneficiary’s progress and ensure objectives are met.

**5. Monitoring and Follow-Up**

Ongoing monitoring and follow-ups are crucial to ensure that the beneficiary’s support plan remains relevant and responsive to any changing needs.

- **Regular Check-ins**: Staff or volunteers conduct periodic check-ins with each beneficiary, generally on a monthly basis, to monitor progress.

- **Support Plan Adjustments**: If a beneficiary's circumstances change, the support plan may be revised to address any new needs or challenges.
- **Feedback Mechanism**: Beneficiaries are encouraged to provide feedback on the support received, which helps with refining and improving the support services offered.

**6. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- All beneficiary information gathered during the eligibility and needs assessment processes is handled in accordance with UK data protection laws.
- Confidentiality is strictly maintained, with data shared only on a need-to-know basis and with the explicit consent of the beneficiary, except where there are safeguarding concerns.

**7. Review and Quality Assurance**

To ensure high standards in assessing eligibility and needs:

- **Annual Review**: This framework is reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with the charity's objectives and any legal or policy updates.
- **Feedback-Driven Improvements**: Feedback from beneficiaries and partner organizations informs periodic adjustments to the framework.
- **Training**: Staff and volunteers involved in eligibility assessments receive training to ensure they apply this framework consistently and sensitively.

**8. Documentation and Record-Keeping**

- All assessments, support plans, and follow-up actions are documented in beneficiary files.
- Records are maintained securely for compliance, monitoring, and accountability purposes.