

A group of volunteers, mostly wearing bright yellow-green high-visibility vests with 'VOLUNTEER' and 'LOWER REGENTS COALITION' printed on them, are working on a riverbank. They are using tools to clear debris and plant vegetation within a fenced-off area. In the background, there is a canal, a bridge, and a brick wall with graffiti. A city skyline is visible in the distance. A purple banner is overlaid at the bottom left.

Celebrating Excellence: G15 Community Impact Report 2024

Contents

| | | | |
|--|----|----------------------------|----|
| Community Awards 2025 | 2 | PROJECTS: WELLBEING | |
| Introduction | 3 | A2Dominion Housing Group | 35 |
| Foreword | 5 | Clarion Housing Group | 36 |
| Context | 6 | Notting Hill Genesis | 38 |
| G15 community investment in numbers | 7 | Sovereign Network Group | 40 |
| | | Hyde Housing | 41 |
| | | L&Q Foundation | 43 |
| PROJECTS: COMMUNITY | 8 | Guinness Partnership | 45 |
| A2Dominion Housing Group | 9 | Sovereign Network Group | 47 |
| Clarion Housing Group | 11 | A2Dominion Housing Group | 49 |
| Guinness Partnership | 13 | Hyde Housing | 50 |
| Peabody Group | 14 | | |
| Sovereign Network Group | | PROJECTS: DIVERSITY | |
| Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing & Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT) | 16 | Peabody Group | 51 |
| Guinness Partnership | 17 | Notting Hill Genesis | 52 |
| Guinness Partnership | 19 | Hyde Housing | 54 |
| L&Q Foundation | 21 | | |
| Peabody Foundation | 23 | Conclusion | 56 |
| | | | |
| PROJECTS: SUSTAINABILITY | | ABOUT THE G15 | 57 |
| Clarion Housing Group | 25 | | |
| Sovereign Network Group | 27 | | |
| Clarion Housing Group | 29 | | |
| L&Q Foundation | 31 | | |
| Peabody Group | 33 | | |

Community Awards 2025

The following section highlights the projects nominated in our first G15 Community Awards. These are the categories and nominees, and you can read their stories in the rest of this report which shows the impact that organisations working with the G15 members are having in their communities.

COMMUNITY

| Category | Nominees |
|--|---|
| Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tameran Kwade, Sonshine Smiles Kate Hampel, Digital Story Company Think Outside the Blox – Northwold Community Centre SocietyLinks, Tower Hamlets Maryam Chowdhury, Beyond the Bias, London |
| Outstanding contribution by a Community Champion delivering projects supporting Youth Work award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kara Davies, MTVH (Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing) resident |
| Young Heroes award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kian Teixeira, Guinness resident |
| Best Collaboration/ Partnership Project award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kids Network Walthamstow Stadium Community Sports Trust Fund Cook for Good |

SUSTAINABILITY

| Category | Nominees |
|--|--|
| Community Group delivering Environmental Projects award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Luciana Britton Newell, Ollerton Gardening Club Julian Kirby, Natural Neighbours |
| Outstanding contribution by a Community Champion delivering Environmental projects award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ann Theresa Carolan, Clarion resident Dave Bedford, L&Q resident Asha Osman, Peabody |

WELLBEING

| Category | Nominees |
|--|--|
| Community Group delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emma Bayou, Miindfulness Kerry Phillips, Saving Souls (Back to School Cuts initiative) Active Within CIC Susie Bush-Ramsey, The Joy in Simple (the 'Love Me' programme) |
| Outstanding contribution by a Community Champion delivering Health and Wellbeing projects award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vikesh Sharma / Steve Griffin, Thriving Stockwell/Stockwellbeing Aliya Bukhari, Voice of BME |
| Community Group delivering projects supporting Cost of Living, and Employment and Skills award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sal's Shoes, CJ Bowry OBE / Founder & CEO Well Grounded, Eve Wagg / Founder & CEO |
| Outstanding contribution by a Community Champion delivering projects supporting Cost of Living award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lyn Hutchinson, A2Dominion resident Mike Nicholls, Selsey Community Forum |

DIVERSITY

| Category | Nominees |
|---|---|
| Community Group delivering projects supporting Diversity award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mohammed Janal, Westminster Bangladeshi Association |
| Outstanding contribution by a Community Champion delivering projects supporting Diversity award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hawa Abdi, community leader |
| Supported/Specialist Housing Champion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stonepillow |

INTRODUCTION

Fiona Fletcher-Smith

Chief Executive, L&Q and G15 Chair

Since I became Chair of the G15 in June 2023, the housing sector has faced significant changes. In July 2023, the Social Housing Regulation Act become law, heralding a new era of regulation. One year later, we had a new government. In September 2024, the publication of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report served as yet another reminder of how vitally important it is to ensure the safety of residents' homes.

Housing associations rightly focus much of their resources on investing in homes and services. But we must not lose sight of how the cost-of-living crisis has impacted the communities we serve. With around one in every three children in the UK living in poverty, this is in danger of becoming the new normal.

Public services are stretched, so G15 members coordinate local partners and activities to bridge the gaps in service provision that have emerged after years of cuts. We have a long-term involvement in places, and a stake in their prosperity and wellbeing. But we can't do it alone.

That's why projects like those featured in this year's report are desperately needed. The G15 is proud to celebrate these unsung heroes who quietly get on with the job of making communities better, and more equitable, places to live.

As I prepare to step down from my G15 role and hand over to my colleague, Ian McDermott from Peabody, next June, there are positive signs for the future.

The Government appears to recognise the scale of the housing crisis, and the role housing associations play in providing homes, tackling inequalities and promoting growth. But G15 members face competing demands on their resources and an uncertain economic environment. We're calling on the Government to publish a new, long-term rent settlement for a minimum of 10 years. Greater certainty over our key source of income will enable us to provide more investment and support for communities.

My congratulations to the award winners and everyone who was nominated. Your dedication, compassion and commitment to supporting those from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds are truly awe-inspiring. It's a privilege to have this opportunity to pay tribute to you.



INTRODUCTION

Daisy Armstrong

Chair of G15 Resident Group and Southern Housing Board Member

The G15 Residents' Group, established in May 2023, comprises two residents drawn from each of the eleven G15 Housing Associations. It was created as a cross-organisational forum for involved residents to amplify the voice of the residents who live in the 770,000 homes owned and managed by the G15.

As a diverse group with expertise from living in socially-provided housing and knowledge of the pressures in the housing sector, we have a balanced understanding of the reality of housing associations' capabilities, alongside the priorities of the 1 in 10 London residents we represent.

Through collaboration with the G15, stakeholders and housing sector bodies we are influencing key housing issues, consultations, and government policy, from the resident's perspective.

We are proud to be supporting the Community Investment Impact Awards, as we recognise the importance of how such community-led initiatives can improve the health, well being and life opportunities of residents.

It is also important to recognise the valuable contribution made by those who work in partnership with housing associations to support local communities, especially as the social impact services provided by housing associations are under such financial strain at the moment.

One of our aims as a residents' group for the year ahead is to support housing associations to build more affordable homes while providing the social infrastructure to deliver services while supporting their less advantaged residents. These awards offer an essential opportunity to recognise and celebrate the community involvement projects happening for residents. We welcome the nominated outstanding and collaborative work being given a platform to showcase their achievements.

We would like to congratulate all the nominees for your innovative work, and the devotion in promoting a more equal and fairer society where people from all backgrounds can thrive.



FOREWORD

Matthew Grenier

Business Development Director, HACT

At the launch of last year's G15 Impact Report at the Lewington Centre, I reflected on the critical role that housing associations play within local communities, communities that had been decimated as a result of a decade of under-investment and increasing poverty.

Now, twelve months later, the mood has changed. The external environment feels more positive, even though many of our residents and local people continue to face significant challenges, economically, socially and personally.

The role of community investment is even more critical. It should not be seen as a peripheral activity that housing associations may or may not play. It should be at the core of social housing.

The G15 have a moment in time to make that difference to people's lives and utilise this more optimistic mood, to be at the forefront of change and making a positive impact for and with people. The examples of this report are testament to that dedication over the past year.

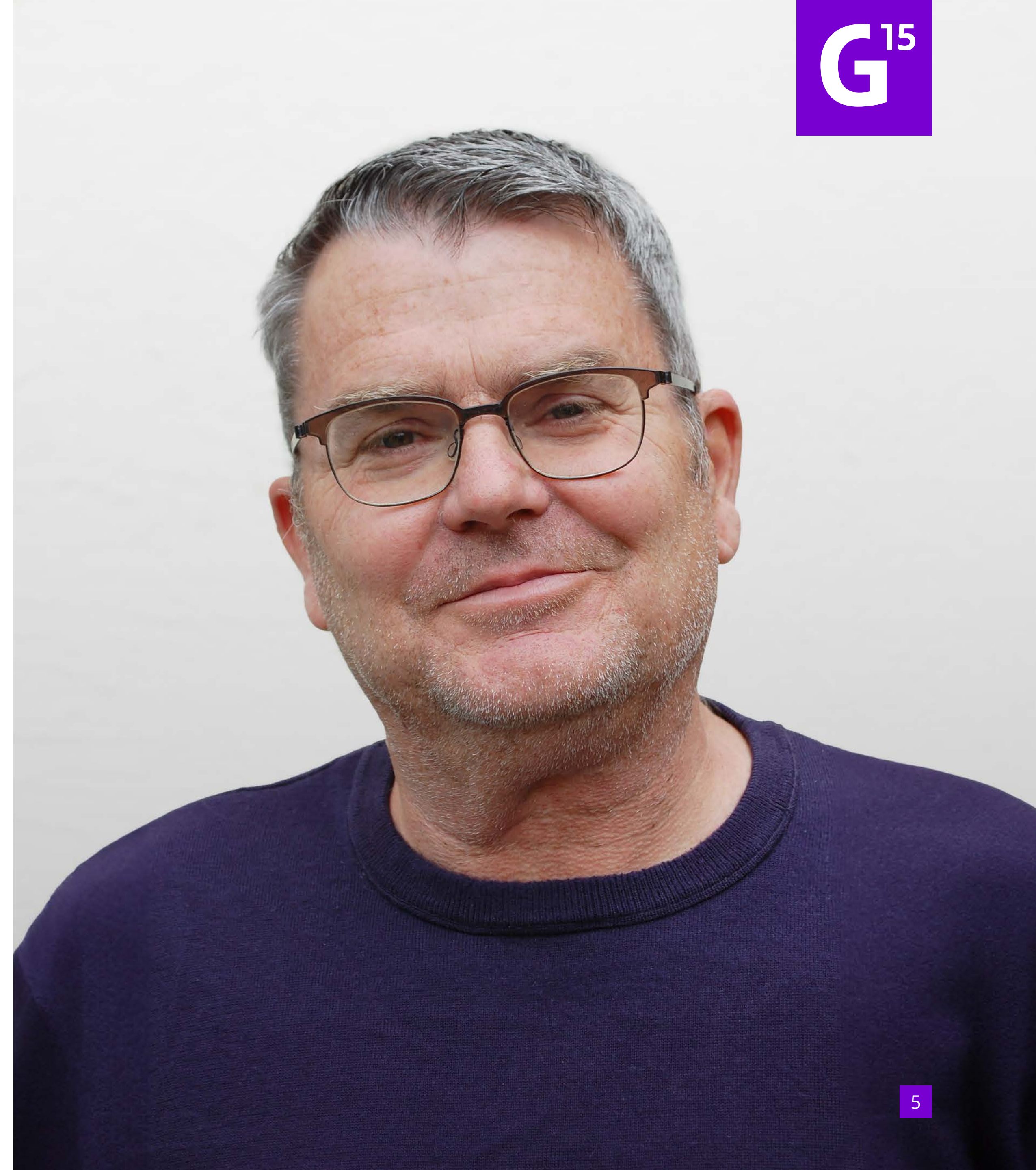
We hope that the G15 will be even bolder in the year to come. Alongside the proposed investment in housebuilding by Government and housing associations, we also need an investment in community building – not just in the community spaces that many G15 organisations own or manage, but also in the broader community infrastructure.

That includes working in partnership with local grassroots organisations, whether offering them peppercorn rents, providing them with core funding or amplifying the work they are doing across your stakeholder networks.

It includes working with your supply chain partners, leveraging their expertise and economic might for the benefit of local people, ensuring that the social value you commission is appropriate, relevant and delivered.

And it includes working with each other, at both a strategic and operational level, making best use of your limited resources to ensure that, collectively, as a network – and as a sector – we do more for all local people and communities, regardless of their social landlord. That we deliver on our social purpose.

We look forward to continuing our work alongside G15 members, identifying, designing and delivering projects that will have a transformational, long-lasting impact on their residents, local people and the communities in which they operate.



CONTEXT

William Miller

Director of Social Impact, Southern Housing

In uncertain and financially challenging times there's an even greater importance on our Social Impact and community investment credentials.

Maximising our social impact is part of our DNA as social purpose housing associations.

The effect we have on people and communities as a result of our actions. Seeking significant positive change addressing social challenges and improving people's wellbeing. We're listening and acting on residents' views and needs priorities. Providing tailored support for those facing complex, vulnerable and disadvantaged situations.

The Better Social Housing Review sees housing associations having responsibilities for more than just a home, enabling residents to live their lives to the full.

The new consumer standards ensure we'll provide local area co-operation; tenancy sustainment support; understanding and acting on the diverse needs of residents.

Stark challenges currently impact our residents, communities and our businesses.

Residents are at the sharp-end of the cost-of-living crisis with many households facing poverty. We see a crisis in mental health and wellbeing support.

Our organisations play a key part in delivering national policy direction, removing barriers and creating opportunities for residents and communities to fulfil their potential. Positively impacting on residents' satisfaction and maximising our social return on investment.

Helping people gain confidence and greater control of their lives is hugely important. We're building partnerships to leverage support for the health and wellbeing of our residents. We're bringing residents together, connecting people to strengthen communities and enhance resilience. As not for profit, social purpose housing associations we're creating opportunities and encouraging people to fulfil their potential.



Community investment in numbers

In the last financial year, 2023/24, the G15 housing association members collectively contributed:

Number of participants in all Community Investment Projects **319,924**

| Investment | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total expenditure on Community Investment | £27,414,681 |
| Total external funding raised to deliver Community Investment Projects | £6,354,979 |
| Total match funding provided to voluntary and community organisations to deliver local projects (staff time, facilities and resources) | £22,170,618 |
| Total amount of grants given to support residents and communities | £5,529,199 |
| Number of staff deployed across all projects | 512 |

| Employment, Training and Business Start Up | |
|---|--------------|
| Number of residents and beneficiaries supported through employment projects | 9,266 |
| Number of job and training starts | 5,807 |
| Number of residents engaged in business skills projects | 906 |
| Number of business start-ups supported | 293 |

| Social Value | |
|---|--------------------|
| Total HACT Social Value –feeling financially better off, securing work and exercising regularly | £52,734,086 |
| Number of volunteers supporting community projects | 10,012 |
| Total financial contribution from suppliers and contractors | £1,929,026 |
| Number of projects delivered by our suppliers | 189 |
| Estimated value of projects delivered by our suppliers through their social value commitments | £45,900,000 |

| Health and Wellbeing | |
|---|---------------|
| Number residents and beneficiaries accessing health and wellbeing support | 45,220 |
| Number of older people accessing social activities | 1,151 |
| Number of young people under 25 accessing violence reduction initiatives | 3,821 |

| Support with Cost of Living & Finances | |
|---|---------------|
| Money guidance: number of people supported | 23,358 |
| Money guidance: cases closed | 16,440 |
| Tenancy Sustainment: number of evictions prevented | 1,601 |
| Number of food provision projects delivered | 90 |
| Number of local people supported through food provision | 20,353 |

| Community Facilities | |
|---|----------------|
| Number of visits to G15 community facilities | 263,495 |
| Number of community centres and facilities open to the public | 238 |

COMMUNITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work

Tameran Kwade, Sonshine Smiles

Sonshine Smiles is an outstanding community group that provides creative, physical and educational activities for children and young people living on A2Dominion schemes in Hounslow and Ealing. Through creative, physical, and educational activities, their exceptional commitment to improving the lives of children aged 8 to 15 is inspiring. Over the years, they have consistently delivered engaging and uplifting projects for young people, offering free, fun-filled activities during school holidays, and much more beyond structured programmes.

What truly distinguishes Sonshine Smiles is their unique, holistic approach. Their mentors and youth coordinators invest significant effort in understanding each child, and then tailor activities that foster self-confidence, resilience and social skills. They don't just offer typical holiday programmes, they create a nurturing environment where children are empowered to choose their level of participation in arts, culture, physical activities, and even meal preparation. This approach has not only positively impacted young people but also their families, as one parent shared:

'As a family, we received incredible financial and emotional support during this challenging time. My daughter, who previously struggled to engage, has blossomed in confidence and made new friends through Sonshine Smiles. The positive impact on her emotional wellbeing has been truly significant.'

Sonshine Smiles has continuously served the community by engaging children in innovative ways, from artistic projects to outdoor play. Their commitment to the physical and mental wellbeing of young people is profound. Their programmes inspire creativity, encourage teamwork, and foster a sense of belonging.



COMMUNITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work

Kate Hempel, Digital Story Company

Kate Hempel and the Digital Story Company (DSC) have been recognised for their intergenerational work in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, specifically the Priory Court Estate and the Banbury Park Estate E17.

The Future You Want

Their first project centred around Priory Court Estate, where Clarion is one of two main landlords, alongside the borough.

In collaboration with composer, Rex Horan, youth workers from Clarion, partners, Worth Unlimited, and slam poetry expert, Shay D created a series of three workshops that would take participants through all stages of writing, recording and filming a spoken word performance. The workshops were well

attended with a consistent attendance rate of 80% throughout. Feedback was excellent, highlighting the enjoyment the participants felt and the skills they learnt.

DSC employed three young residents to engage with older residents at Priory Court Estate and assist with the production of the workshops. These trainees received one-to-one support to develop their admin skills, face-to-face engagement with the public, organisational and technical skills. There were challenges in terms of getting all the residents to participate, but it provided a learning experience for the trainees and Kate, the Project Manager.

The project culminated in the creation of a compelling hip-hop video titled "The Future You Want," crafted by young individuals from the estate in collaboration with local businesses.

During summer 2023, the film premiered at a special launch event on the estate, garnering significant attention and praise.

 **Priority Court Housing Estate**



CLARION
HOUSING GROUP



Phase 2 - Where We Live

Building on the success of their initial endeavour, with support from Clarion Futures, they implemented a second intergenerational project, this time at Banbury Park.

They excelled in engaging and collaborating with local youths and residents to produce another impactful hip-hop film.

Titled "Where We Live," this latest project is a spoken word narrative reflecting the experiences of young people living in Waltham Forest.

It incorporates animations of young individuals crafting and utilising avatars of themselves, inspired by anime. The project involved 10 young people from Banbury Park Housing Estate and Higham Hill between September–October 2023. They partnered with poet and performance artist, BREIS, composer, Rex Horan, and budding manga artist, Kaleem Noor, with overwhelming interest in the workshops.



Ten young people attended one full-day workshop and one half-day workshop, learning how to develop awareness of their communities and honing their writing and performance skills. Each recorded their own verse, and manga artist, Kaleem Noor, was on hand to assist each participant with creating an animated avatar. In February 2024, DSC staged a public screening gala at Walthamstow Town Hall in partnership with LBWF and Stow Film Lounge. This also involved a pop-up workshop with Kaleem Noor and DSC volunteer editor, Dave O'Neill.

Each trainee experienced one-on-one mentoring and professional introductions to further their experiences and networks. Trainee, Shakira Crawford, joined DSC's board of directors, and Kaleem Noor, trainee manga artist, was trained in Adobe animation techniques as part of the group project.

📍 **Higham Hill and Banbury Park Housing Estate**





COMMUNITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work

Think Outside the Blox – Northwold Community Centre

The Guinness Partnership partnered with Think Outside the Blox (TOTB), an award-winning community engagement charity, to take over the running of the Northwold Community Centre in Hackney.

The centre is a much-needed local hub, and TOTB stepped in to ensure that it remained open and accessible to its community, bringing their own unique brand of energy and enthusiasm to the role. Since taking over responsibility for the centre in January 2024, TOTB have re-established it as a vibrant community facility, increased engagement with the local community and broadened the range of activities on offer. Focusing primarily on youth provision, the centre now offers activities spanning sports, education, music, trips, work experience and mentoring, all catered to young people aged 6-18. The centre is a safe and welcoming environment, an alternative to being on the streets, and it also offers homework support and classes in computer coding.





Founded by reformed gang member Bobby Kasanga, TOTB is the driving force behind some of London’s most innovative engagement and diversionary projects, including the 32 Boro Cup, and Hackney Wick FC. Their inspirational team of staff and volunteers have the credibility and authenticity to engage with some of the city’s hardest to reach demographics and communities.

One notable case study that highlights the impact of the programme is Shayden, a 16-year-old student with a passion for photography. With support from TOTB, Shayden has flourished and has now set up an Instagram page where he has garnered an impressive following.

Shayden’s journey exemplifies the transformative impact of the programme, not only providing opportunities for skill development but also fostering entrepreneurship and empowerment among youth participants. Through personalised support and mentorship, TOTB continue to nurture the talents and aspirations of individuals like Shayden, contributing to their personal and professional growth within the community.

Furthermore, Shayden’s talent has been recognised within the community, and he has been appointed as the photographer for Hackney Wick FC. This showcases Shayden’s skills and also serves as an inspiration to other youths in the programme, demonstrating the tangible opportunities that can arise from pursuing one’s passion.



COMMUNITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work

SocietyLinks, Tower Hamlets

SocietyLinks Tower Hamlets has made an extraordinary impact on the local community by providing essential services and programs that have positively transformed the lives of residents. Over the course of the year, SocietyLinks supported 1,645 residents, reflecting the broad reach and effectiveness of their initiatives. Their holistic approach addresses a wide range of needs, from employment and education to community cohesion and personal wellbeing.

Employment is a critical area where SocietyLinks has made a significant difference. Through their targeted online employment support, 80 residents received assistance, with an impressive 35% of them successfully securing jobs. This targeted intervention not only provided job seekers with the necessary skills and guidance but also helped them achieve tangible progress towards sustainable employment.

SocietyLinks' commitment to supporting young people is evident in the wide range of activities and programmes they offer. The organization engaged 534 young people, aged 8-19 years, in both online and face-to-face youth club sessions. These sessions provided a safe and constructive environment where young people could participate in educational workshops, sports and trips. In addition, 48 young people earned accredited qualifications through training courses, which boosted their employability and increased their confidence. The Summer Project offered further opportunities for young people to gain work experience and volunteer, helping them develop essential skills and knowledge that will benefit them in the future. Furthermore, SocietyLinks educated young people about the risks of knife crime, equipping them with the skills to navigate challenging peer-group situations. This initiative has promoted safety, wellbeing, and positive behaviour among young residents.

SocietyLinks' work has also contributed to a greater sense of community cohesion. By organising events attended by 521 residents and engaging 67 volunteers, including young people and residents of all ages, SocietyLinks has fostered positive relationships among community members and strengthened the sense of belonging in the locality. This focus on community building has created a more supportive and inclusive environment for all residents.

Please visit their [Instagram](#) for a wider range of photos and videos.



COMMUNITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Youth Work

Maryam Chowdhury, Beyond the Bias, London

Beyond the Bias has been recognised by Sovereign Network Group for their outstanding efforts in the community. Beyond the Bias has worked incredibly hard to create spaces, opportunities and events to better our young residents' future and wellbeing.

Beyond the Bias (www.beyondthebias.co.uk) is a social mobility organisation, upskilling working class ethnic minority young people in London.

They operate through three branches, offering a range of programmes, including:

1. **Beyond the Curriculum** – Tackling educational poverty by providing real-world experience, work placements, qualifications, training, bursaries, and CV/personal statement support.
2. **Beyond the Culture** – Addressing class poverty by offering skill development and hobbies to individuals facing financial, racial, gender or age barriers.
3. **Beyond the Change** – Empowering young people by providing a platform to voice community concerns and deliver impactful campaigns.





Overall Impact

- Engaged 2,100+ individuals
- Facilitated 92 employment placements
- Empowered 166 individuals with qualifications
- Launched 13 innovative programmes across London
- Delivered music, arts, and sports-based mental therapy programmes with a 97% retention rate
- Provided 25,000 meals to those in need
- Supported 31 individuals to gain university admission
- Helped 89% of participants build new skills and improve mental wellbeing
- Delivered over 6,000 hours of mentoring and support, significantly enhancing youth engagement

Most recently, Beyond the Bias has worked with SNG on a youth social action project to establish a Youth Mental Health Board that empowers young people to become Mental Health Champions. The Board will research and explore mental health issues within their local areas before forming teams to develop and deliver their own youth social action project.

This incredible project, combined with the wide range of other projects offered by BTB, exemplifies the transformative and tangible positive impact for young people that might not otherwise be possible.

For more detail on Beyond the Bias and the range of great projects they run, please see below:

☐ Girls Who Skate

☐ Kids Who Code

☐ Summer Camps

☐ World Environment Day

☐ Apprenticeship Programme



COMMUNITY

Community Champion delivering projects supporting Youth Work

Kara Davies

MTVH (Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing) resident

Kara, a young MTVH resident, has played a pivotal role in driving a collaboration project called **Young Residents in Partnership** to raise awareness of the views, opinions and ideas of young people living in social housing.

Kara's hard work has culminated in a brilliant report, "Shaping Housing Futures", packed with useful learning and recommendations for the social housing sector on how young people can be better involved in decisions made by their landlords. Working with Partnership for Young London, Kara was one of six peer researchers from three housing associations who explored the question:

'How do young people take leadership roles in influencing strategy and decision-making in Housing associations and impact local housing services?'



Her pioneering work looks set to influence thinking and practice and she has been boldly sharing learnings from this research and championing the need for young people's voices to be heard. This includes, speaking at the recent NHF and CIH Housing Community Summit in Liverpool, Housing 2024 in Manchester and the HACT Community Investment Conference in Birmingham.

The full research report can be found [here](#).



COMMUNITY

Young Heroes

Kian Teixeira, Guinness resident

Kian Teixeira is a Brixton resident who completed two years on a Rio Ferdinand Foundation (RFF) programme. Joining as an articulate but shy teenager, he has progressed to become an RFF colleague, a programme ambassador and a Ralph Lauren intern.

Kian said, 'With their guidance and unwavering support, the foundation opened doors I never knew existed, helping me transform my dreams into a fulfilling career. What once seemed impossible became my reality, thanks to their belief in my potential and constant support.'

The Guinness Partnership (Guinness) has been working with RFF to provide opportunities for young people to improve their employability and life skills. RFF is a youth and community development charity working in the UK's most marginalised communities to support young people to tackle the inequalities they face.

The programme has operated in Lambeth for the past two years, engaging young people aged under 25 in weekly activities to increase skills and confidence, raise aspirations and identify career progression pathways.

Kian joined as a socially isolated young person lacking in confidence and progressed from a shy participant to being recruited as an RFF colleague to deliver and promote the programme. He is a shining example to other young people and is using his experience to help them benefit from the same opportunities as he did and inspire the next generation.

Kian left school not knowing what to he wanted to do with his life, but he had a keen interest in sport. While many of his friends had progressed to college and university, Kian was working two zero-hour jobs to support himself and look after his mother. Outside of work he was spending increasing amounts of time isolated in his room and had disengaged from his community. He initially took some persuasion to apply to join the programme but decided to have a go as he wanted to make positive changes to his life.



Kian thrived on the programme, exploring sport and creative pathways, completing a Level 1 Leadership course, and designing and producing his own podcast. Showing a flair for community action, Kian went on to shadow the RFF team, before securing a sessional contract as part of their delivery team. He participated in progression opportunities with Kiss FM, Jockey Club, Warner Bros, Warner Music and New Era Sports. RFF supported Kian with job applications, and he secured a part-time time role as a hotel receptionist, giving him flexibility to continue working with RFF.

In July 2023, Kian was selected as RFF's spokesman for their Ralph Lauren partnership due to his leadership skills and his ability to act as a positive role model. In February 2024, Kian secured a 12-month paid internship with Ralph Lauren in their Digital Commerce team.

'Kian is a real example of how our work impacts young people; once they have a platform to showcase their talents, they are unstoppable. We are proud to see Kian's growth and development into young adulthood and are honoured to be such an instrumental part of that journey.'

Shauna Belvett, RFF



COMMUNITY

Collaboration/ Partnership Project

The Kids Network

The Kids Network exclusively supports 8-11-year-olds in the lead up to and during their transition from primary to secondary school. They mobilise local volunteers to become mentors.

Each child is matched to a mentor, based on what the child considers to be representative of their needs. They then meet with their mentor once a week for one year, benefitting from at least 60 hours of one-to-one intervention outside the home and school environment.

The programme is divided into three phases that build an effective structure and allow the mentor and child to experience the biggest impact from their time together. The first three months focus on building connections and laying a strong foundation in the relationship. Months 3-9 set goals that they would like to work on together with the focus on setting goals and not achieving them. Months 9-12 are for reflection on what they have achieved.





Children are referred to the programme for a variety of reasons and are facing a range of barriers: these barriers may be at home, in school, social or emotional. 93% of children referred faced at least one barrier.

In 2023/4

- 7,979 hours of sessions delivered
- 4,990 one-to-one sessions completed
- 312 new children inducted
- 307 children supported
- 5 partner schools
- 8 London boroughs

At the end of the programme

- 87% reported they felt they were good at things
- 91% reported feeling cheerful about things
- 91% reported they felt people care about them
- 82% reported feeling confident

The Guinness funding allowed The Kids Network to focus on children in the borough of Lambeth. This partnership has supported 77 children from across eight Lambeth schools.

The tailored and child-led approach means that everyone has a unique journey which is designed around their individual needs and interests. Each child is given a £30 monthly budget and mentors support mentees in managing this, and encourage them to explore local activities, many of which they would not otherwise have access to. This is an opportunity for them to have fun, be themselves and safely explore. Guinness acknowledges the impact The Kids Network has had on children living in Lambeth during their transition into high school.



'I've had the best time with my mentor because I haven't been outside that much. And on the weekends I don't go out so I have had the best time of my life being able to go out.'

Mentee at 12-month impact collection

'Its been the most meaningful experience I have ever done up until now in life. It's a very valuable experience for us, it's a two way street. I think that's enough. It just helps you fill your life with meaning.'

Quote from mentor at 12 months



COMMUNITY

Collaboration/ Partnership Project

Walthamstow Stadium Community Sports Trust Fund

The purpose of the Walthamstow Stadium Community Sports Trust Fund is to deliver community sports and wellbeing provision over a 5-year period. Volunteer Board members comprising residents and specialist staff oversee the distribution of the Fund. Since 2018 it has awarded over £168k to deserving projects, out of a funding pot of £250,000. Through their decisions they have helped increase local community participation in health and sports and recreation in these areas.

Twenty funded projects have served individuals, young and old alike, and positively influenced the community in Walthamstow over the years. Over 1,000 participants have benefitted from a range of activities to promote health and wellbeing and support community cohesion.





Collaboration is evidenced through working with Stadium Place Tenants and Residents Association and Allotment Society, Local Councillors within the London borough of Waltham Forest, the local MP, the Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith, the Metropolitan Police, Peabody and other housing associations, L&Q Neighbourhood Officers, Anti-Social Behaviour officers, and Better Gym to name just a few.



One project was recently nominated for the University of Cambridge Judge Business School's – Social Innovation Prize. Top ten projects supported by the fund are:

1. Wellbeing Lounge, with a renowned national football club and partnership working with the NHS
2. Cycling for disadvantage youths/ behavioural challenges
3. Community Sports Academies
4. Tai Chi and Daolu classes
5. Race-running project
6. Hockey clubs
7. Cricket training, centred around girls and minorities
8. Skateboard Skills training
9. After-school clubs
10. Allotment and growing support and training



COMMUNITY

Collaboration/ Partnership Project

Cook for Good

Peabody and Cook for Good have developed an innovative partnership to tackle food insecurity, poor diet and social isolation on Peabody's Priory Green estate near King's Cross. Cook for Good is a social enterprise founded in 2019 with a mission to use cooking and food to draw in and support local communities. Its partnership with Peabody has enabled them to develop and scale their organisation rapidly, with a community kitchen, cookery school and surplus food pantry now all operational on the estate in Islington.

Cook for Good's food pantry and commercial kitchen are key to its service delivery with the latter being central to its revenue model. Both are run on Peabody premises at zero-rent and subsidised utility bills.

This partnership was established to test a new way of working between a food-based charity (Cook for Good), a housing provider (Peabody) and food surplus charities like The Felix Project. Peabody's research found that food insecurity is one of the biggest issues in Islington with:

- 47.5% of children living in poverty, and
- 1 in 10 people aged 15 and over experiencing moderate or high levels of food insecurity.





These issues are especially stark on the Priory Green estate where unemployment amongst 18 to 25-year-olds, single mothers and minority ethnic people is high. The food pantry is a low-cost way for people to do their weekly shopping, be signposted to local services and to make new friends. The commercial kitchen offers volunteering and employment pathways as well as opportunities for fun experiences, like cooking sessions for local children during the school holidays.

The partnership has been a great success and is achieving what it set out to do:

- Over 10,000 community meals have been provided to Peabody residents and the surrounding areas
- CfG now has a growing team of staff and 30 community volunteers
- CfG has almost 400 pantry member households and an ever-growing waiting list
- 85% of members say they feel more connected to their local community and 81% of members say they worry less about the cost of their food shop and are able to make healthier food choices.



CfG delivers meaningful social impact to the local community and businesses. In under five years, including and despite the setbacks of the pandemic, the partnership has already realised many of its ambitions and continues to set even more ambitious targets for the future.





SUSTAINABILITY

Community Group delivering Environmental Projects

Luciana Britton Newell, Ollerton Gardening Club

Clarion Housing has recognised the Ollerton Gardening Club (OGC) as an outstanding environmental project. The group of 10 residents has worked together to significantly transform a disused green space into a flourishing community garden where everyone is welcomed.

The gardening club started with an individual resident's (Luciana) vision of a garden that would bring families and neighbours together, having a space for their children to explore nature and the beauty of biodiversity and to build connections with their neighbours. Seeing the keen interest amongst residents, Clarion Futures (CF) and the Grounds Maintenance team collaborated to host a Community Planting Day. Recognising the community's enthusiasm, CF provided a micro-grant to cover materials needed to transform the green space and sourced additional funds. From there, the OGC has taken ownership of the initiative. As a community group, they have been actively building garden beds, planting vegetables and maintaining the space. Their ongoing efforts have created stronger bonds among residents, with people coming together not just to work on the garden but to socialise and support one another.

One of the most notable examples of OGC's impact is their commitment to long-term sustainability. As a voluntary group, they have begun fundraising efforts and have applied to grants schemes to implement more features for the space.





The community garden has provided a wealth of benefits, including access to fresh produce, a welcoming place for outdoor activities, and an inclusive environment for people of all ages and abilities. Residents now have a common interest that brings them together, reducing social isolation and creating a more supportive, connected neighbourhood. OGC has exemplified how a simple idea of a community garden can have so many benefits and what can be achieved when a community works together towards a shared goal. Their initiative is not just about gardening; it's about inspiring and creating a space for young people to get involved with nature, creating a sense of belonging for the community and leaving a lasting impact.

[Ollerton Gardening Club Instagram](#)



SUSTAINABILITY

Community Group delivering Environmental Projects

Julian Kirby, Natural Neighbours

Natural Neighbours aim to work to ensure towns and cities are reaching their potential with wildlife, benefitting the health and wellbeing of the global climate and local communities together. Urban areas have massive potential to host an increase in wildlife and biodiversity – and studies show that access to nature in cities makes a huge difference to health, wellbeing and even crime rates. Natural Neighbours offers a solution that is connecting and accessible for everyone, not just those lucky enough to enjoy a private garden. From window boxes to balconies, terraces to private and communal gardens.

Natural Neighbours' unique response to ensuring this aim is met looks to create a network of gardens and balconies across the city, encouraging wildlife and the community to move between them. Natural Neighbours has created an app where local community members can observe their outdoor spaces and assess (using guidance from the app) what wildlife they have and could create. They can map this, connecting wildlife across communities and evidencing opportunities to improve spaces for wildlife together.

As a specific example, their project in Hackney, in partnership with Daubeney Primary school, is a great example of their ethos in practice, working to engage residents in habitat creation and nature experience within the school grounds. Not only has the project achieved an impressive ecological environment with growing areas, a pond and space to explore nature, they have also embedded a strong social network around the space. Working with 50 local volunteers, contributing over 400 hours across the creation of the space, the community is both now connected to nature and one another. As the project approaches completion, the reflection with participants involved tells us that 100% of volunteers feel they live a healthier lifestyle, are less isolated and are prouder of their local community as a result of engaging.



The impact of this support is exemplified in the following [video](#).

This specific case in Hackney is just the beginning, Natural Neighbours is an organisation in its infancy, but is eager to grow quickly and work with more communities across London. Their drive to increase environmental diversity in open spaces and at people's homes supports this, evidencing how environmental projects can manifest across lives, positively impacting those who create and interact with them, whilst looking after the local eco systems. It would be great to see Natural Neighbours recognised for their unique offer to environmental connectedness and inspire their mission to further spread this across London.





SUSTAINABILITY

Community Champion delivering Environmental Projects

Ann Theresa Carolan, Clarion resident

Local resident and keen environmentalist, Ann Theresa Carolan, has been the driving force behind green initiatives at the Ranwell West estate in Bow, Tower Hamlets.

In May 2022, the idea of enhancing green spaces was first presented to Clarion by Ann with the ambitious goal of establishing a Green Waste management project. Her involvement began when she proactively reached out to Clarion CEO, Clare Miller, with the proposal to start a composting scheme in Bow. The idea led to Ann becoming a key member of a local Green Waste group.

The Green Waste group is a resident-led steering group, initially formed by three residents, Clarion Futures and the local Green Party Councillor, with Ann emerging as a key figure in its development. The steering group led to a series of events and initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable practices. A behavioral study funded by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and conducted by Queen Mary University was completed, followed by two workshops led by MAD LEAP, a pioneering organization focused on Micro Anaerobic Digestion and circular economy solutions. An open day for the community attracted over 100 local residents, further highlighting the growing momentum of green initiatives in the area.



Ann’s efforts continued as she played a crucial role in the creation of the Ranwell West Community Garden, which has drawn widespread interest from the community. The Ranwell West Community Garden was transformed from an empty space to a thriving community garden with growing spaces for residents. Due to the high demand for more garden plots, expansion plans are already in progress.

Currently, Ann is assisting with a pilot food waste project with the local council, serving as a resident representative ensuring the initiative's success on the ground. Her unwavering dedication has not only transformed a local green space but also built a stronger sense of community around environmental stewardship. Ann is passionate about the environment and connecting communities to nature and biodiversity and it’s her drive that pushes local green initiatives to take fruition.





SUSTAINABILITY

Community Champion delivering Environmental Projects

Dave Bedford, L&Q resident

L&Q resident, Dave Bedford, is founder and leader of the Lower Regents Coalition, a community-led volunteer group that takes care of the canals of east London so they can be enjoyed by residents. The Lower Regents Coalition (LRC) run clean-up and improvement events for volunteers across the stretch of the Regent’s Canal from Limehouse Basin to Mile End Road. Dave formed the group in 2013 and has been instrumental in the transformation of the messy patch into a thriving urban oasis and haven for nature.



From donning waders and planting bulbs, to pulling trollies filled with bags of rubbish, Dave’s band of volunteers has removed over 7,000 bags and 10 tonnes of rubbish from in and around the canal, created more than 200sqm of wildflower meadows with over 20 varieties of plants, and installed 600sqm of floating ecosystems and aquatic planting.

The improved biodiverse habitat has brought more wildlife to the canal, offering shelter, spawning and nesting areas for coots, moorhens, herons, ducks, swans, invertebrates and fish.

Dave noticed the unkempt patch of canal when he moved to Mile End: ‘I used to walk along (it) and was struck by how messy and unloved our section was.’ What began as people picking up rubbish, quickly became a community of like-minded volunteers mobilised by a shared love of wildlife and their local area.

‘We started with litter picking and progressed from there. Someone cycled past us one time and asked what we were doing. They put us in touch with their colleagues and soon we were attending training sessions on how to lead waterway and towpath events.’



The Lower Regent's Coalition officially adopted the Tower Hamlets stretch of the canal as part of Canal & River Trust's "Adopt a Canal" programme in 2014 and Dave has triggered a "Blue Planet effect" amongst local people. The community has rallied around the local gem, with growing numbers taking action to fight the rising problem of plastic pollution.

After getting a regular group going, for Dave it was a case of, 'is there anything else we can do?' When the Canal River Trust drained 900m of the canal in 2016, he lobbied for permission to run a clean-up event to remove the plastic inside, and the Lower Regent Coalition's volunteer base went from 100 to 900 in a matter of days. Almost eight tonnes of rubbish were removed, alongside an unexploded WW2 grenade.

Dave's efforts were recognised in 2018 when the lower end of the canal received its first Green Flag award – a prestigious prize for quality parks and green spaces – which the coalition has successfully retained every year since.





SUSTAINABILITY

Community Champion delivering Environmental Projects

Asha Osman

For over ten years, Asha has dedicated her heart and soul to the Westcott Park Community Garden, transforming it into a vibrant hub of education, support and nourishment for the local community. She has done all this as a volunteer, which speaks volumes about her selflessness and commitment to making a difference.

Asha has worked with local schools to organise student visits to the garden. Her classes provide a practical education on sustainable agriculture, nutrition and the importance of community involvement. By inspiring the next generation, she is not only teaching valuable life skills but also instilling a sense of responsibility and stewardship in our youth.

Moreover, Asha has taken significant strides to address food insecurity within our area. By cultivating over 35 different varieties of fruits and vegetables, she ensures that residents have access to fresh and healthy produce on a weekly basis. The garden serves as a valuable resource where anyone in need can help themselves, helping to alleviate hunger and promote better nutrition in our community.





Recognising the mental health challenges faced by many residents, Asha has initiated local afternoon teas in the garden. These gatherings provide a welcoming space for individuals experiencing social isolation to connect, share stories and build relationships. Her compassionate approach fosters an environment where residents feel valued and supported, helping to mitigate feelings of loneliness and anxiety.

Additionally, Asha is actively involved with a community service scheme aimed at empowering young people. She welcomes 20 community servicemen each week. The project enables young people to get involved in the garden and provides a space for learning and rehabilitation, allowing them to develop essential life skills while also fostering a sense of belonging.





WELLBEING

Community Group delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Emma Bayou, Miindfulness

Over the past three years, Miindfulness has gone above and beyond to support the mental health and wellbeing of A2Dominion residents living in Ealing and Hounslow; over 600 individuals from diverse backgrounds with different needs.

Miindfulness has been a crucial partner in delivering projects that address mental health and wellbeing across multiple areas. From football initiatives that promote physical health to targeted mental health workshops for parents and children, their innovative approach ensures that participants receive the support they need in a safe, empowering environment. Notably, their music workshops for young people stand out, combining creativity with emotional expression to provide a unique platform to explore wellbeing through an artistic lens.

What truly sets Miindfulness apart is its commitment to empowering individuals with the tools needed to succeed. Their workshops equip parents, carers and young people with strategies to improve emotional regulation and mental literacy, enabling early identification and intervention for mental health challenges.

Miindfulness' holistic approach to wellbeing ensures that every project they deliver is tailored to the community's needs, fostering an environment where people can thrive.





WELLBEING

Community Group delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Kerry Phillips, Saving Souls (Back to School Cuts initiative)

The Back to School Cuts initiative is a partnership between Clarion Futures' South London Communities team and Saving Souls, contributing to the wellbeing of young Clarion residents in Lewisham. This initiative has not only provided essential services but has also improved the lives of local children by addressing both their physical appearance and mental health needs.

The initiative was created in response to a worrying increase in mental health issues among young people, particularly among young people aged 8-14. Through this programme, free hair care and wellbeing sessions have been offered to Clarion residents in Lewisham, creating a safe, supportive environment for self-expression and community building.

One key feature that sets this initiative apart is its holistic approach to youth support. The haircuts, provided by skilled stylists, go far beyond the usual. Every stylist involved has undergone certified mental health training through S.I.R.G., with accreditation from MHFA England, enabling them to offer emotional support to the young people they serve. These professionals listen to and converse with young people whilst styling their hair. This combination of services provides an environment of openness, offering young people a safe space to discuss their emotions, and therefore, hopefully, improving their mental wellbeing.





Improvements in self-esteem are crucial for overall development, especially for young people, in preparation for the school year. By helping children feel better about how they look and supporting them mentally, Back to School Cuts has equipped them with the confidence to face academic and social challenges with a positive mindset, and a fresh haircut!

Beyond individual benefits, the initiative has increased community cohesion. Parents and residents have praised the safe, welcoming environment created by the programme. The sessions provide physical makeovers and emotional relief and connection, which are essential for young people, especially in today's climate of increasing mental health struggles.

Back to School Cuts addresses critical issues in the community, providing holistic care that combines personal grooming with emotional wellbeing.





WELLBEING

Community Group delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Active Within CIC

Active Within, through its “Let’s Get Active” programme, has had a profound impact on improving health and wellbeing across communities in Grahame Park and Woodberry Down. By offering free, accessible fitness classes tailored to all ages and abilities, they have successfully addressed key challenges related to inactivity, physical health and mental wellbeing.

One of the programme’s key successes is its approach to eliminating barriers to exercise, particularly in underserved areas. Classes are held in local spaces, such as parks and community centres, making it convenient for residents to participate without the burden of travel or cost. The variety of fitness options, ranging from boot camps and yoga to mindfulness sessions, ensures that there is something for everyone. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment among participants, encouraging sustained physical activity and social engagement.

Onur, the founder of Active Within, plays a critical role in ensuring the group’s success. He has cultivated strong relationships with community leaders, health professionals and local organisations, ensuring that the programme is not only aligned with residents’ needs but is also part of a broader, community-wide effort to improve wellbeing. Partnerships with local GPs, social prescribers and health services mean that Active Within is often recommended to patients as a means of improving physical and mental health, and reducing social isolation. This integration of community fitness with healthcare services positions Active Within as a holistic solution to improving wellbeing.





Active Within adopts an innovative approach and community-centred ethos and has a proven track record in promoting health and wellbeing in local communities. A brilliant example of how Active Within has supported a resident's career journey is Sam (name has been changed). Sam had previously suffered from depression and anxiety and was referred to Active Within by their doctor. They started to exercise regularly by attending classes. Since starting their journey Sam has stopped needing medication for depression and anxiety. Sam has become a volunteer with Active Within and, during this time, gained personal training qualifications and additional work within the industry as they wanted to get sector experience. They are now a valued employee and continue to grow as a coach.





WELLBEING

Community Group delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Susie Bush-Ramsey,
The Joy in Simple (the 'Love Me' programme)

The Joy in Simple strives to provide holistic health and wellbeing support to women across Richmond. Their flagship "Love Me" programme addresses the mental and physical health challenges faced by women, particularly those from low-income backgrounds. Love Me is a 6-week programme designed to enhance wellbeing and prevent/combat mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety and bereavement through movement, nutrition, confidence building and mindful activities such as craft.

The Love Me programme has supported 100 women to date and runs alongside a GP surgery providing a social and community intervention rather than a medical one. The project has been so successful that women continue to link in with the group months and years after.

Statutory services recognise the programme's importance too:

'As a Social Prescribing Link Worker, nothing gives me greater joy than our clients securing successful links to the community from the referrals we make. This is the case for all the women we've referred to the Love Me programme. They say the 6-week course nourishes their mind, body and soul. It's picked them up and helped to overcome loneliness, as they've formed friendships with others on the Love Me journey. The class is non-judgemental, relaxed and fun.'

Nora, Social Prescribing Link Worker

To hear more about the Love Me programme from those who have taken part, please visit the [website](#).



WELLBEING

Community Champion delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Vikesh Sharma / Steve Griffin
Thriving Stockwell/Stockwellbeing

Stockwell Partnership and Grantham Practice have pioneered community-led health and wellbeing initiatives in Stockwell, whilst championing accessible services, sectoral collaboration and involvement of local communities in the design and delivery of solutions to improve health and wellbeing. Their leads, Steve Griffin and Vikesh Sharma, epitomise working with and for communities, which has led to them founding “Thriving Stockwell” (TS).

Formally established in 2022, Thriving Stockwell encompasses over 60 local cross-sectoral groups, uniting community organisations, education providers, health services and housing under a single identity to address health and wellbeing challenges and influence change. They spearhead the steering group with over 15 core members, and co-design place-based strategies to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.





Their achievements to date include:

- Supporting 19 regular community groups across 6 local venues with over 2,250 attendances at activities supported by 58 volunteers
- Co-designed and co-delivered 18 events for the different groups with over 1,250 attendees, ranging from walks exploring Muslim highlights in Stockwell with Brixton Mosque, to events for Black History Month, LGBTQ+ History Month, Diwali, Eid, Easter, the Day of Portugal, Latin-American Festivals, and Christmas celebrations
- Established an online platform, the first collective local source of information on health and wellbeing services
- Produced the 'Thriving Stockwell Wellbeing Map' and distributed in hard copy to all residents
- Piloted the 'household model' as an approach to supporting individuals with mild or long-term mental health problems, complex needs, social isolation, and those with multiple long-term conditions who frequently seek primary or secondary healthcare
- Facilitated specialist services such as the vaccination uptake programme (Covid, cold and flu) and visits from the Lambeth community health and wellbeing buses providing over 968 interactions, including 98 one-to-ones and 65 mental health sessions
- Facilitated clinical provision in the community, e.g. chronic pain management workshops within the local adult college, health inequalities and social prescribing professionals working from local community centres
- Led on the delivery of the Stockwell Strong fund, providing additional support and resource for 9 local community groups, helping residents through the cost-of-living crisis
- Worked with Hyde on the plans for a dedicated community health centre for Stockwell from 2025.

Resident feedback

'Being with others after years of isolation and doing something to help other people makes me feel different. I have found art therapeutic, and I feel happy when I'm here.'

Upon starting, 49% reported poor mental health; after 12 weeks, 27% reported poor mental health. On first engagement, 31% reported few things in life as very or completely worthwhile; after 12 weeks, 79% reported feeling that they had things to do in life which were worthwhile.





WELLBEING

Community Champion delivering Health and Wellbeing Projects

Aliya Bukhari, Voice of BME

Voice of BME has been running health and wellbeing projects from the Limelight Centre, Old Trafford, since its doors opened 7 years ago.

The group currently has the following sessions at Limelight:

- Healthy Hips and Hearts – a weekly chair exercise class which is for BME women to come together and work on their overall fitness, if their current health status stops them from joining in with regular exercise such as the gym. It brings women from the southeast Asian community together and over the last year has grown from a group of 15 weekly attenders to over 30
- Healthy Hearts Matter – to discuss healthy lifestyle changes within the Asian community
- Women’s Wellbeing Club – a safe space for women to come together to discuss their circumstances and own personal experiences
- Men’s Talk on Tuesdays – a safe space for men to come together to discuss their circumstances and own firsthand experiences This is especially difficult within the cultures around the Old Trafford area
- Healthier and Happier Me – supports people with diabetes, hypertension, COPD and emotional and mental wellbeing, and is an amazing opportunity for so many people as they can self-refer or be referred by their own GP.





Aliya put together an amazing event for International Women's Day, with the theme of women's sexual health and all things menopause. 80 people attended, with a mixture of men and women. Aliya is truly inspiring and goes unrecognised for a lot of the work she does for the community. She is well known to all and is extremely knowledgeable within her field of expertise.





WELLBEING

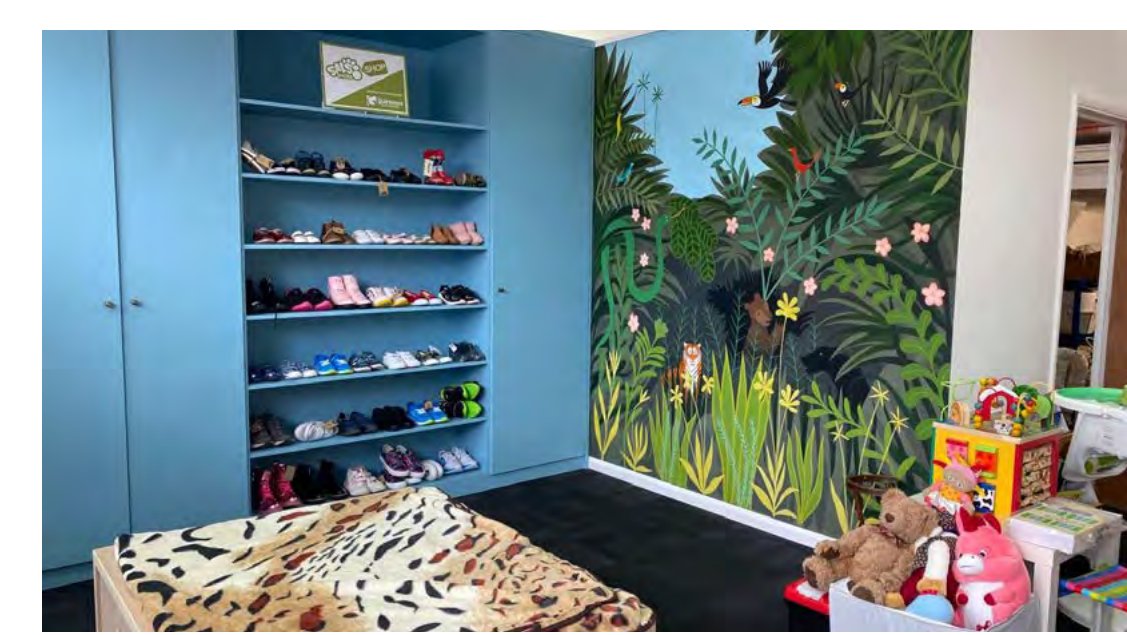
Community Group delivering projects supporting Cost of Living

Sal's Shoes, CJ Bowry OBE / Founder & CEO

Since 2020, Guinness has partnered with national charity, Sal's Shoes, to provide free footwear to children in need across several of our communities, including Hackney. In each area the project is based at a vibrant community facility, with Hackney Children and Baby Bank serving as the hub for local residents. A further hub is due to open at the Northwold Community centre in Hackney.

The Sal's Shoes concept is simple. They collect good-condition, pre-worn shoes from across the country. Via a network of over 500 national grassroots partners, these shoes are distributed to those who need them most, families experiencing poverty or in crisis, survivors of domestic violence, homeless people and refugees. Their primary aim is the relief of poverty, and their work addresses the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our communities. They reach families struggling to afford the basics – food, heating, children's shoes – falling into debt to pay for essentials and putting a huge strain on families. Their shoes give families in poverty comfort, dignity and protection. Via their network of baby banks, food banks, domestic violence refuges, schools, charities, social services departments and community organisations, Sal's Shoes are distributed to those who need them the most at no cost.

Demand for their shoes is doubling year on year. They are the only charity in the UK doing what they do.





In 2020, Sal's Shoes set up their first Sal's Shoe Shop in collaboration with The Guinness Partnership, offering those referred the opportunity to browse and choose children's shoes at no charge. Sal's Shoes provided 1,890 pairs of shoes in 2023/24 through community hubs. Over the entire partnership, they have distributed over 4,770 pairs of shoes. Theoretically, this amounts to three children in need receiving a pair of shoes every day for the last four years.

There are currently 4.3m children in the UK living in poverty. School uniform costs put huge pressure on families, who cut back on essentials, with children experiencing judgement and stigma for attending school in the wrong clothes. One in ten families go into debt buying uniforms, some buying children's shoes on hire purchase.

Project feedback includes:

'Thank you so much. I received these shoes through my social worker. I just sobbed and sobbed – the relief was incredible. It means more than I can say.'

Parent receiving school shoes with an emergency parcel



WELLBEING

Community Group delivering projects supporting Employment and Skills

Well Grounded, Eve Wagg / Founder & CEO

Well Grounded is an award-winning social enterprise, launched in 2016 to support the UK's unemployed with the requisite skills to access sustainable careers in coffee. They create social change by partnering with the coffee industry to provide opportunities for skilled, passionate and committed individuals to grow.

The growing coffee industry has 174,000 current vacancies and is expected to grow by 5.8% in the next 5 years. Increasing levels of post-pandemic mental and physical health needs can impact on employment. Today, 1.28 million people are out of work and the risk of long-term unemployment has grown to 35%. Well Grounded looks to combat this, empowering individuals with the skills to thrive in life, covering technical coffee and hospitality qualifications, employability skills and access to sustainable job opportunities.

To date, Well Grounded has supported 542 people through their employability programme, 96% of whom have gained accreditation and 70% of whom have gone into work, education or further training. Eighty-three percent of those securing work sustain it for over 6 months, and Well Grounded is now connected with 140 employers to support their growing scheme.



These case studies exemplify the impact this project can make on individuals' lives:

Before meeting Well Grounded, Liam had not worked previously and was mostly at home 'playing video games and surviving' as he puts it. His older brother, DB, was the first in their family to find a job, having previously completed a Well Grounded programme in 2017. In early 2024, DB met the Well Grounded team and thought that the time had come to help his brother find something to give him purpose and acquire a new skill. DB brought Liam to the Well Grounded assessment day and the rest is history.

Speaking about his experience at our Graduation event, Liam shared that everything had changed for him since he started the course, growing in motivation, confidence and becoming more sociable. His message for people considering the course is, 'It was awesome and if you are struggling, please sign up for it, it's the best.' After completing his work placement at the British Medical Association coffee bar, Liam was offered a role as a General Assistant at the Tower of London. Whilst he is still getting used to the early starts, he enjoys coming to work with his fellow colleague, Anna.

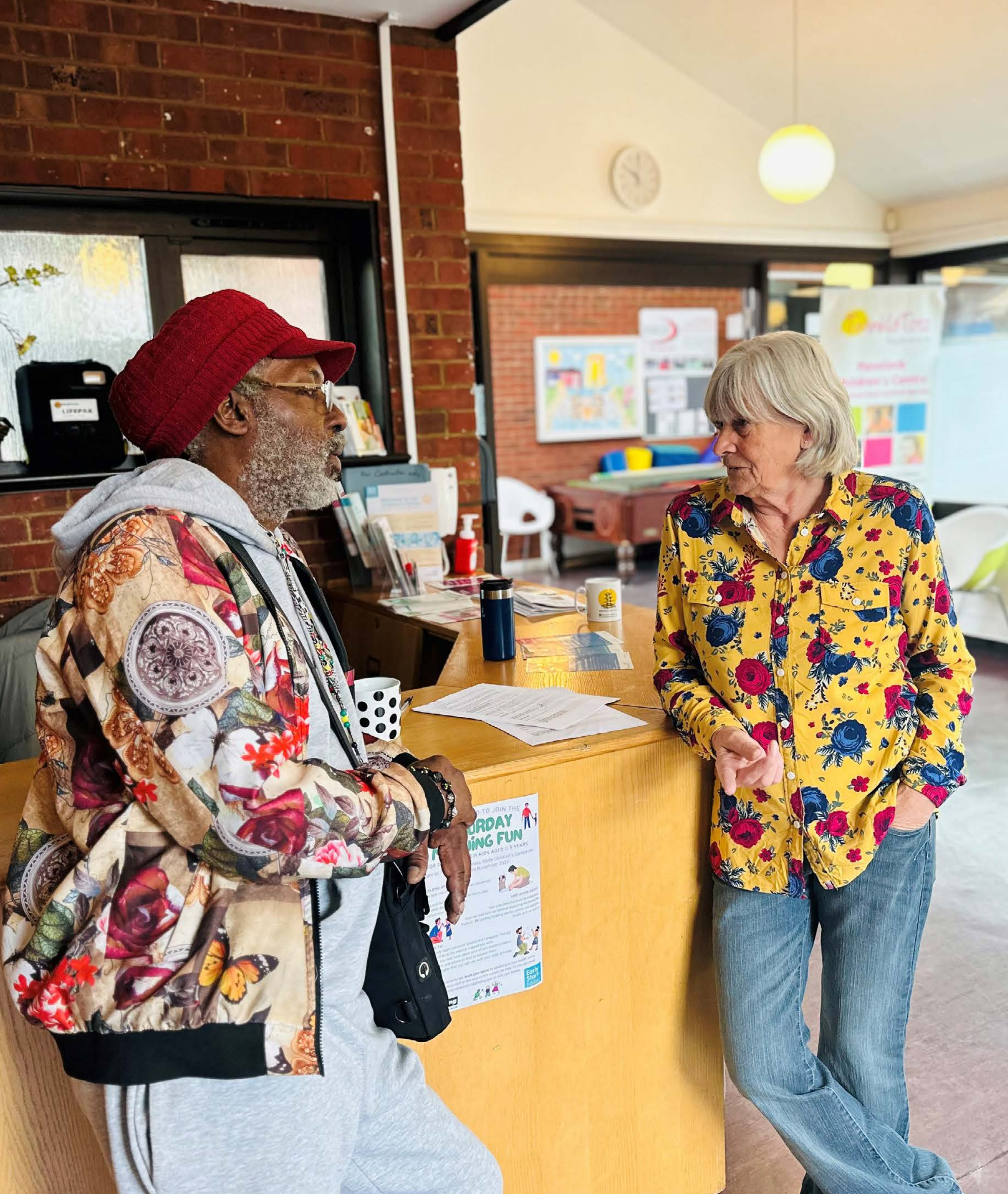
Well Grounded provides much-needed support for those who may not otherwise be able to engage with statutory support agencies, giving them the opportunity to learn new skills, grow confidence and create a new path in life. Their unconventional approach to employment support makes the project unique and is evidently impactful to those who engage.

To see more information about Well Grounded and the impact they have made on individuals and communities over the last five years, please see below:

[An introduction to Well Grounded](#)

[5 Years of Well Grounded](#)





WELLBEING

Community Champion delivering projects supporting Cost of Living

Lyn Hutchinson, A2Dominion resident

Lyn is being recognised for her exceptional work in addressing food insecurity and supporting vulnerable families in Southall.

Lyn’s advocacy for food security began when she noticed the increasing struggles faced by local residents due to rising living costs. Recognising the urgency of the situation, she began volunteering with a local church’s food distribution service. During her time there, she played a key role in providing essential groceries and meals to families in need. However, when the church’s food service was discontinued, Lyn was undeterred. She saw this as an opportunity to seek out more sustainable solutions for her community and took decisive action to fill the gap left behind.

With a deep understanding of the needs of the residents in Southall, Lyn reached out to A2Dominion to advocate for continued support for families experiencing food poverty. Lyn and A2Dominion now work with The Felix Project, a charity specialising in redistributing surplus food, and have established a holiday food hub at the local community centre.

The service is now fully operational and has become a lifeline for many families in the community over the holiday periods. Over 1,000 families facing food insecurity have accessed nutritious and much-needed food supplies.

Lyn Hutchinson’s work exemplifies the power of one person acting with passion, persistence and a deep understanding of the needs of those around them.

[Lyn shares her experience of volunteering](#)

WELLBEING

Community Champion delivering projects supporting Cost of Living

Mike Nicholls, Selsey Community Forum

Selsey Community Forum (SCF) is a volunteer-run community support service based in the isolated rural, coastal community of Selsey, West Sussex. There is a significant economic divide in the town and a high proportion of residents affected by long-term health conditions.

SCF have developed an entirely free, volunteer-run service for vulnerable residents. This includes new youth provision, a high street shop offering advice and support, local support groups for lonely and isolated residents, community lunches, a food pantry for those experiencing financial hardship and a large gardening project.

The Selsey Care Shop offers a wide range of support services including a monthly warm hub, befriending and welfare calls for the elderly/isolated, buddy-assisted transport and an optician. They also provide parents groups and dementia support groups.

Mike Nicholls, the chair of SCF, is a vocal and active local community member who drives forward change, not just in Selsey but across Rural West Sussex. Mike and SCF are leading the way for improvements in community-led local services in rural communities, ensuring they are accessible and meet the diverse needs of these rural communities. They have been largely reliant on the energy and commitment of their volunteers and since receiving a Hyde grant have been able to extend their Care Shop.

'I get amazing satisfaction from the befriending activities that we run, and the pleasure given to lovely people.'

Lynn Unitt, volunteer





DIVERSITY

Community Group delivering projects supporting Diversity

Mohammed Janal, Westminster Bangladeshi Association

Westminster Bangladeshi Association provides a wide range of services and facilities for the local Bangladeshi Community in South Westminster. The group aims to advance education, arts, leisure and social welfare in the local community, and works towards the relief of poverty amongst Bangladeshi residents in Victoria and surrounding areas.

The Association provides a wide range of activities at the centre with the support of volunteers. Activities include, mother tongue language classes, homework support, youth activities, carrom board sessions, a monthly get together and celebration of cultural events. The Friday Youth Club is well attended by a diverse range of local young people. Local families enjoy an annual day trip to Hayling Island every year. The group had a recent visit from The Honourable Labour MP Rachel Blake for Cities of London and Westminster. Rachel showed her gratitude to the committee for their involvement in the local community and their participation in a recent Westminster sports day event.

The group does incredible work in Westminster and most recently provided assurance and support not only for their members, but the wider community in response to the summer riots.





DIVERSITY

Community Champion delivering projects supporting Diversity

Hawa Abdi, community leader

Hawa Abdi is a dedicated community leader who runs the Center of Excellence, a Somali-led community organisation on the Grahame Park Estate in Barnet. Her work is focused on empowering and supporting East African communities through advocacy and dialogue, hosting a space for open discussion about family relationships, physical and mental health, and overall wellbeing.

Since 2023, Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) has been funding Hawa's work at the Center of Excellence, collaborating on projects and events that have benefited and showcased the potential and diversity of the Grahame Park community. Hawa played a pivotal role in organising events for Black History Month and Somali Independence Day, where young people learned about their cultural heritage, performed songs, theatre and dance, and celebrated the uniqueness of East African culture. These activities fostered a sense of pride and identity among young people, helping them connect with their roots and understand the importance of their cultural legacy.

A further significant achievement was a Community Health Fair, which brought together the Somali community to raise awareness about cancer screening, vaccinations and other health services. Health practitioners attended in person, and community leaders engaged with residents to discuss health issues which too often go undiscussed in the East African community. This initiative not only improved health literacy but also strengthened trust between the community and local healthcare providers.





In addition to cultural and health initiatives, Hawa has been instrumental in promoting sports and physical activity within the community. She helped establish a community sports club in collaboration with NHG and other local partners. The club aims to be fully community led by 2025, with local parents and young people gaining FA coaching qualifications. This initiative not only promotes physical health but also provides crucial employment opportunities and leadership roles within the community.

One of the notable projects is the “Father and Son” initiative, which began in March 2023. It focuses on strengthening relationships within families by providing a space for fathers and sons to engage in meaningful conversations and activities. This programme addresses the unique challenges faced by East African families in the UK, promoting positive role models and supporting family cohesion. This project is part of Hawa’s wider effort to address stigma around relationships and mental health in the Somali community. By creating safe spaces for dialogue and providing culturally sensitive support, she has helped many individuals seek the support they need.



Overall, Hawa’s work, dedication and ever-friendly approach have had a profound impact on the East African community in Barnet. Her dedication to improving health, strengthening family dynamics and celebrating cultural heritage has benefited individual community members and fostered a sense of unity and resilience. As the Center of Excellence continues to grow, the positive changes she has initiated are likely to have a lasting effect on the community for years to come.



DIVERSITY

Supported/Specialist Housing Champion

Stonepillow

Each year, Stonepillow supports around 1,000 acutely vulnerable people. Each client has their own story, but common histories include time in care, working in the armed services, incarceration, childhood trauma and/or domestic violence. Substance misuse and mental health issues are commonplace.

Stonepillow provides a diverse range of services under the umbrella of our five pillars:

- Prevent homelessness and rough sleeping through supporting people early to retain their homes or make positive and planned moves
- Relieve the suffering of those who find themselves homeless or with nowhere stable to live through provision of basic needs as well as emergency or temporary accommodation
- Recover our clients' health, wellbeing and independence through focused casework addressing the root causes of a person's homelessness or insecure housing
- Resettle into new, sustainable supported or independent housing
- Restore lives; preparing clients to be tenancy ready, with the skills they need to live independently, happily and healthily, and equipped to reintegrate into the community

In 2023, Stonepillow supported 375 people to move into appropriate private sector, third sector or sheltered accommodation (including Hyde properties).





Stonepillow's partnership with Hyde is diverse:

- They engage at least 20 Hyde clients each week from their Chichester Hub. Their hubs host sessions on cooking on a budget, digital inclusion, CV and job search help – and much more
- Hyde purchases second-hand furniture from Stonepillow's second-hand store for special situations with customers, which generates income
- Hyde donates hardly-used and new furniture to Stonepillow from their New Homes team
- Hyde supports the Big Sleep Out event, with colleagues joining the event as paid attendees
- Hyde Charitable Trust has provided a small grant for continued hub services which are not supported directly by statutory funding
- Hyde provides homes for vulnerable service users.

Stonepillow is an innovative and responsive service. The work they do meets the needs of the diverse clients who come through their doors. Staff go the extra mile to support all clients, which is reflected in the positive outcomes achieved by Hyde residents.

CONCLUSION

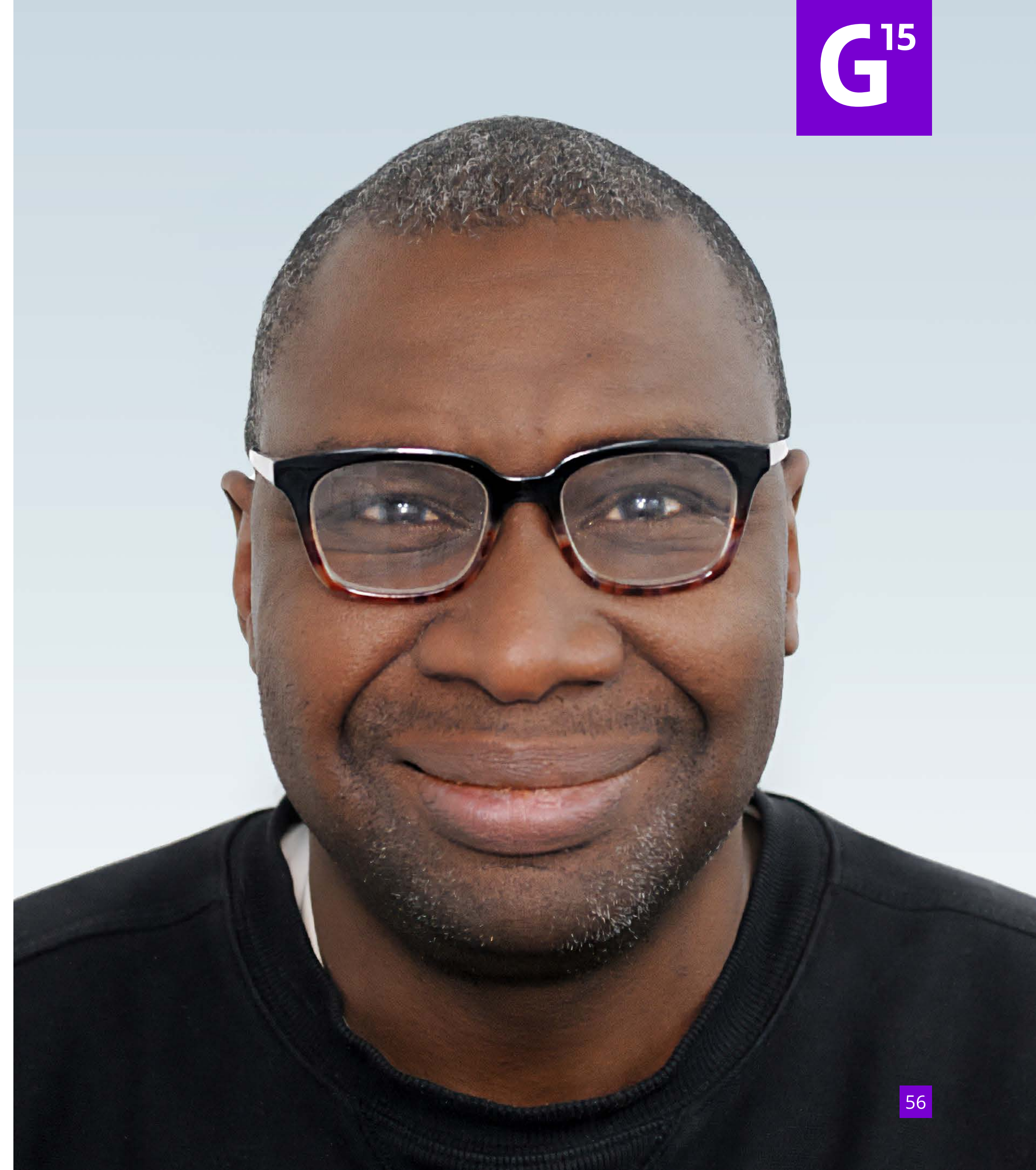
Dele Ryder

Partnership and Fundraising Manager, A2Dominion

This year's impact report highlights the incredible contribution residents, local groups and partner organisations make to the communities the G15 housing associations serve.

From addressing the cost of living to empowering young people, tackling food insecurity and improving the health and wellbeing of thousands of individuals, their impact is immeasurable. The voices and involvement of our residents are essential in creating thriving, sustainable communities and ensuring people are connected to vital services which, as many of these projects illustrate, have transformed people's lives.

Finally, I want to thank all the resident volunteers, community champions and community organisations for their incredible work, and we look forward to supporting existing projects and new ideas to improve our neighbourhoods and communities in the future.



About the G15

- ▶ The G15 is a group of London's largest housing associations. We're the collective voice of some of the leading organisations in the housing sector.
- ▶ Our members house one in ten Londoners and are the largest providers of affordable homes in the capital. We build a quarter of all London's new homes and own or manage more than 600,000 homes.
- ▶ Housing associations were set up to support people in housing need and this remains at the heart of everything we do today.
- ▶ We are independent, charitable organisations and all the money we make is reinvested in building more affordable homes and delivering services for our residents.
- ▶ Each G15 housing association is different, but we're all striving towards the same goal – to help solve the capital's housing crisis and improve the lives of Londoners.

a2dominion



the guinness partnership

Hyde



MTVH



Peabody



Sovereign Network Group



g15.london

 @G15London  The G15

For any enquiries about this report, please contact
caroline.wolff@a2dominion.co.uk
dele.ryder@a2dominion.co.uk