

HOW ISLINGTON CAME TOGETHER

Islington Giving Covid-19 Impact Report

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Islington, local businesses and funders, we have raised over £409,000 to support people who endured particular hardship during the first Covid-19 lockdown earlier this year.

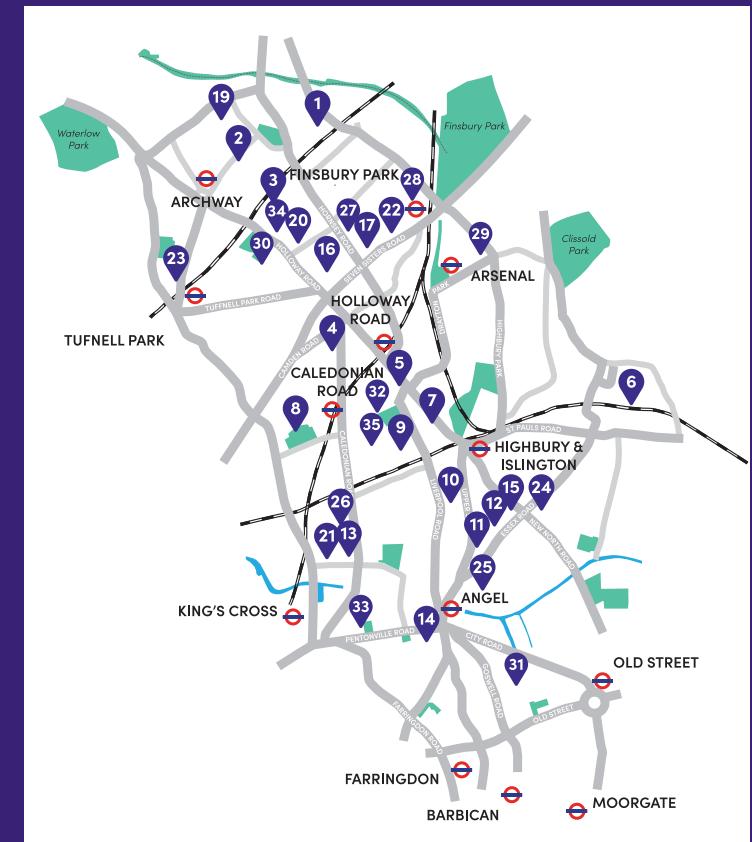
The money was spent not only in crisis grants to individuals, but also given to groups who work longer-term with people who are having a particularly challenging time.

Through our work with Islington Giving, we knew the strength of people and partnerships in the borough before the crisis, and

reliance on local ecosystems of support has never been more evident than during this period. New issues continue to emerge – the uncertainties of the ongoing crisis, the health implications and new restrictions in society mean that even more local people are struggling financially, socially and mentally.

The Islington Giving Crisis and Recovery Fund will continue to provide much needed support.

Thank you to everyone who has stayed with us and Islington groups in this difficult time.



OUR HIGHLIGHTS

“Thanks to the support from Islington Giving, we have been able provide families with the necessary resources i.e. laptops and sports equipment, to help them take part in a variety of activities from yoga, boxing, maths masterclasses, talk with friends, sports quizzes, and family fitness, just to name a few.”
(Founder of Sports and Life Skills CSC)

The Fund supported a total of 37 groups and organisations reaching out to the most vulnerable people in the borough.

Our relational approach, developed over previous years, made the process easier. The in-depth knowledge of Islington and local groups held by our two grant managers was vital. They brought a wealth of experience to the process.

Our teams were exposed to a different kind of grant making, fast, and reactive, which in turn helped the groups respond to needs quickly

We have formed better relationships with other funders as a result of working together across the London Funders' portal.

Islington Play Association - £9,951 awarded



We were able to expand the variety of Islington groups than we funded, providing services for different ages and acknowledging specific vulnerabilities. Over half of the groups we had either not supported before or have not worked with for several years.

Thanks to us being part of the London-wide response with London Funders, we maximised the resources coming to Islington, and groups we couldn't fund had the opportunity to be funded by a pool funder. There were more than 20 groups we would have funded, but were picked up by other funders, relieving pressure on our budget.

“ Being with people I have a rapport with (on a landline for me), is a lifesaver in this time of need. Coming together with fun and jokes, seriousness, movement and creativity is almost as good as the real thing.”

Tony, aged 73 (Well Versed group/All Change)



CRISIS FUND IN NUMBERS

Crisis Fund has released over £408K. The 37 groups that received grants between April and September were extremely varied.

We kept to a maximum grant of around £20k per group. We also co-funded with other funders on several applications, and awarded to some groups working in several boroughs but only for work carried out with Islington residents, and we tried to cover work supporting a range of people and issues.

While most groups do not specify particular service users, out of the total of 37 groups we funded, 21% were delivering services and support primarily to BAMER groups, 27% were delivering services primarily to young people, and 10% to older people.

In terms of specific services and support provision, 18% were primarily focused on mental health and social isolation, and a similar percentage on physical health and activities, 35% on food and other essentials, and 32% on the digital divide, such as supporting people without access to, or the ability to use, technology.

“They have been really helpful during lockdown, helping us with our electricity and gas bills, and with our phone repairs.”
(Person supported by Elfrida)



FULL LIST OF FUNDED GROUPS

Spear (£9,000)	The Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants (£15,000)	Light Project International (£5,000)
Whittington Park Community Association (£9,000)	Freightliners Farm (£9,774)	Mildmay Community Partnership (£4,845)
Islington Somali Community (£9,000)	Angel Shed (£8,350)	Mobile Repair Service Independent Living (£2,800)
All Change (£9,959)	Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association (£20,000)	Help on Your Doorstep (£20,150)
Islington Play Association (£9,951)	Islington Chinese Association (£19,007)	Copenhagen Youth Project (£10,000)
One True Voice (£10,000)	Islington Mind (£15,000)	Healthy Minds, Healthy Bods (£4,274)
Minority Matters (£9,490)	Stuart Low Trust (£15,000)	Galbur Foundation (£3,000)
YES Outdoors (£10,000)	Sport & Life Skills (£10,100)	Company Three (£20,960)
Islington People's Rights (£16,105)	The Elfrida Society (£10,000)	The Manna (£5,000)
Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust (£2,400)	Healthy Generations (£9,131)	Islington Mind (£5,000)
Healthwatch Islington (£19,800)	Chabad Lubavitch (£5,520)	The Hive Food Bank (£5,000)
MahaDevi Yoga Centre (£9,905)	Octopus Community Network (£5,000)	Hillside Clubhouse (£1,120)
Little Angel Theatre (£20,000)		

STORIES FROM ISLINGTON

“For some in isolation these calls have been the only human voice they have heard in a week”
(Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants)

Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants (£15,000 awarded in May)

The Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants (ICRM) works to create a strong, positive, community in Islington for people who have been displaced from their countries of origin due to persecution, war, and poverty. “We work mostly with destitute asylum seekers, but we do have people that have recently got refugee status and a small number of non-refugee migrants as well”, explains Andy, CEO at ICRM. “Pre-Covid the services we offered were mainly face to face, people would come to us and we would see around 65 to 70 people every day in a rolling basis. They would come to learn English, take part in activities...and help them with things like registering an Oyster card, which has a digital barrier, accessing their bank account online...”

Some of the money from the Crisis Fund allowed the Centre to continue sending support packages to people most in need. These packages included food vouchers, mobile phone top-ups and transport allowances. Mobile phone top-ups have meant people can keep in touch with their families, with the staff, and with their online language lessons.

The Coronavirus Time Capsule

After 18 weeks, 215 companies and 1735 videos documenting teenage life in lockdown, we are #ClosingtheCapsule.

See our brand new [Coronavirus Time Capsule Website](#).

Company Three

Company Three (£20,960 awarded in May)

Coronavirus Time Capsule is a project that Company Three shared with groups of young people around the world during this time of uncertainty.

“Week-by-week we are creating a video time capsule, recording teenage experience during the coronavirus pandemic”, explains Becky Martin, Executive Director at Company Three. “We think it is essential that we continue to offer the teenagers we work with support, connection and a space to be creative.”

In partnership with Nick Hern Books Company Three also publish the Coronavirus Time Capsule Blueprint, an online guide for any group anywhere who wants to start making their own Time Capsule. “We are spreading the word across the UK and the world, inviting companies and organisations everywhere to join in and become part of the development of the project”, says Becky. After 18 weeks, 215 companies and 1,735 videos documenting teenage life in lockdown, the Capsule closed in September. Thanks to all the kind donations to the Crisis Fund, more young people in Islington feel more connected and have their voices heard through the Capsules.

The Hive Food Bank - £5,000 awarded



Islington Play Association (£9,951 awarded in July)

In order open the playgrounds for the summer holidays, we set up a raft of new systems, creating bubbles of 15 children who would play together on each adventure playground for two-week slots. We tried our best to prioritise those most in need. This was not easy: nearly half of Islington children live in poverty, and there is so much need. From the 20th of July to the 28th of August hundreds of children were able to play freely on adventure playgrounds in Islington. Analysis of our holiday bubbles has shown that a high percentage were from Islington's most disadvantaged families.

“It’s amazing. I didn’t know we could do meditation via this means but it does work. You cannot question the evidence. We see it helps. (Islington Mind’s “Self-Care Take-aways” is an online weekly meditation group)

Residents' Support Scheme (RSS)

£25,000 of the Crisis Fund was allocated to people in need of food vouchers or help with fuel bills via the London Borough of Islington’s Residents Support Scheme (RSS), a local welfare fund managed by Islington Council and supported by Cripplegate



Freightliners Farm - £9,774 awarded

DELIVERING DIFFERENTLY

“ It’s an amazing experience where you get the chance to not only be involved in but lead change in your area, with people in your age group.
(Young Grant-Maker 2019)

Young Grant Makers

A group of local young people aged 16-22 became Islington Giving's third group of Young Grant Makers (YGM) in March 2020, just before the national lockdown. YGM wish to make a difference locally, hoping to have a knock-on effect on the future, and join Islington Giving to make grant-decisions that will benefit Islington's young people.

The 2020 YGM programme started in March but was soon disrupted by COVID-19 and lockdown. We paused for several weeks to plan a new course of action. Although still new to the programme, this year's participants were keen to carry on and we found it important to hear the voices of young people during this period. After some careful planning, we resumed online sessions: the first session took place in April, and following weekly online meetings, the grant-makers developed and launched their call for applications in June.

“ Lockdown has made me really grateful for what I have, and for all the people around me.
(Young Grant-Maker in May 2020)

9 of the 12 grant-makers we started working with in March came together for their final decision-making session in September. This session was held in the office, after running a risk assessment – the third time the group have been together in person since March. The grant-makers spoke of how proud they felt for sticking at the programme, making funding decisions they were excited about, despite the challenges of working online. It was great to finish the programme on a high!

The group has decided to fund six projects to support Islington's young people. Decisions will be announced in October.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

YOUNG GRANT-MAKERS 2020 will prioritise projects that:

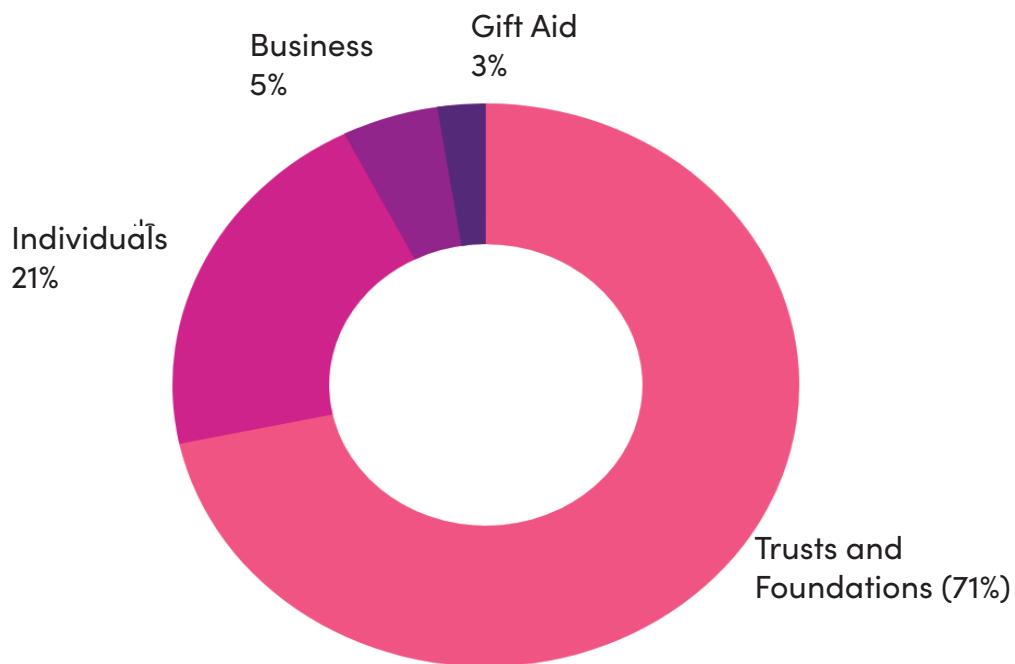


Enable the creativity and potential of young people to support and guide their future
Are a space for young people to speak about their mental health, including any fears they have about the current social climate
Give young people the confidence to speak up on social issues that affect them and their mental health, having conversations they may not have had in the classroom

DONATIONS

Total funds raised (as of end of August):

£409,396



“ I will try to give more next time (if??) I get paid.
Wishing you all the best in the work you do.
(A supporter of Crisis Fund during lockdown)

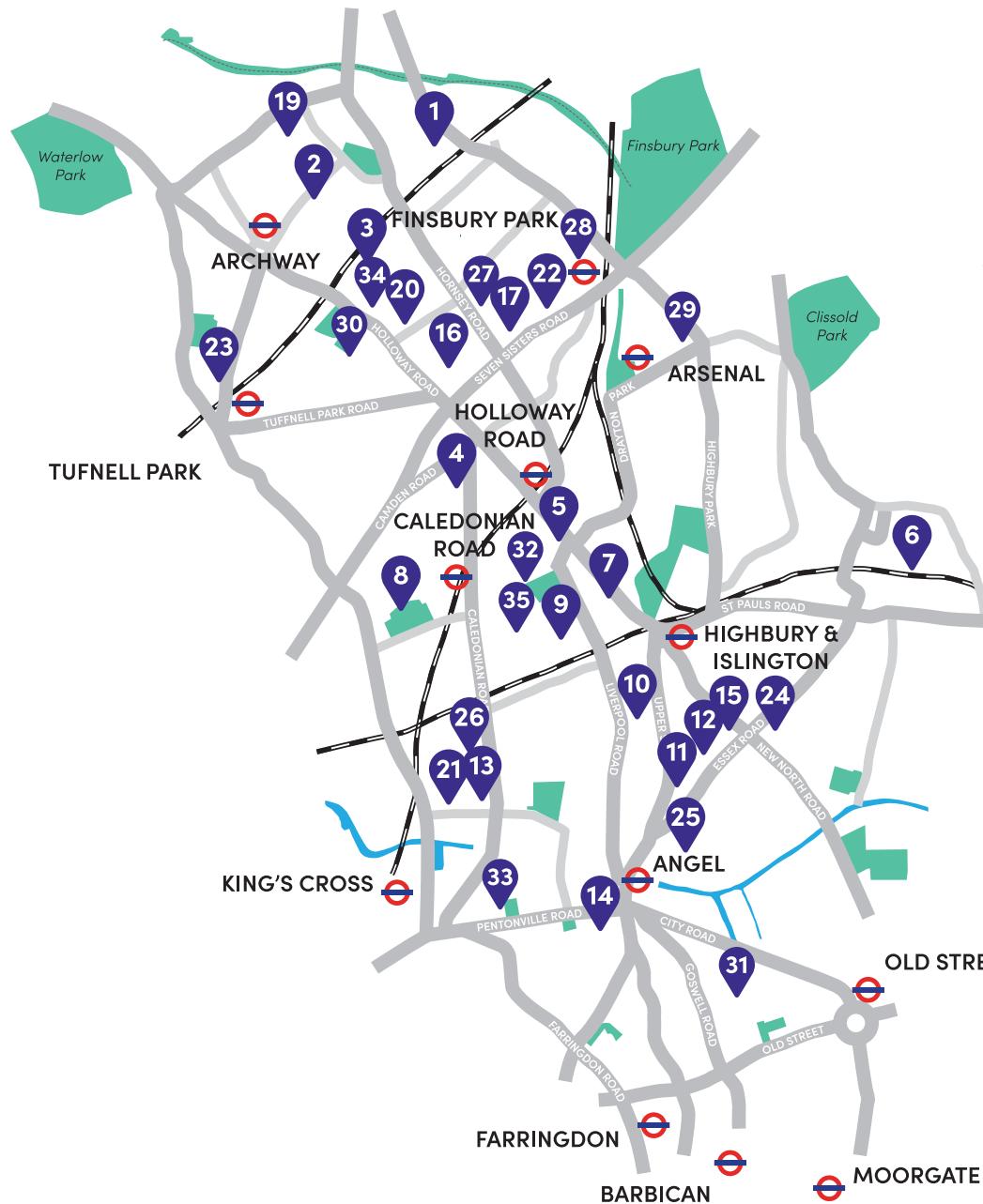
Process behind grant-making

We aligned our fund with the [London Funders' Community Response Fund](#). Modelled on learning from the appeals following the Grenfell Fire, the London Funders' model quickly devised a collective funder response to COVID-19, offering groups across the capital the opportunity to apply for funding to meet emergency needs and to reshape their service delivery. This pooled funds from over 50 funders, and offered us the opportunity to align our funds to their process, without having to set up a separate application process.

The groups were able to make just one simple application, making the process easier for them, and our programme team was able to use the shared portal for sourcing applications, making the process quicker and more standardised. Groups applied via the London Funders' portal in [two waves](#): the first was for emergency provisions (food, data, etc) for grants of up to £5k; the second for “doing things differently”, for awards up to £50k.

To get money to groups quickly, we changed some of our usual practices. We were not able to visit groups, for example, usually something we do with all applicants, so assessments were done online or over the phone. The grant approval process from our board was streamlined and delegated, while our resources team adapted to making more frequent payments. We deepened our knowledge of need, from our role as sifters for initial due diligence on London-wide themes to being part of the strategic planning group. We also gave Islington Giving existing grant holders flexibility in how they used our funding during the crisis period.

CRISIS FUND MAP



1. Islington Mind
2. Octopus Communities
3. Islington Chinese Association
4. Angel Shed Theatre Company
5. MahaDevi Yoga Centre
6. Mildmay Community Centre
7. Company Three
8. Hillside Clubhouse
9. Freightliners Farm
10. Elfrida Society
11. Little Angel Theatre
12. Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants
13. Light Project International
14. Stuart Low Trust
15. The Manna
16. Healthy Generations
17. One True Voice
18. Chabad Lubavitch
19. Hornsey Lane Estate Community
20. Healthwatch Islington
21. Copenhagen Youth Project
22. Help On Your Doorstep (HOYD)
23. HOYD
24. HOYD
25. HOYD
26. HOYD
27. Islington Somali Community
28. Minority Matters
29. Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust
30. Whittington Park Community Centre
31. All Change
32. Islington Play Association
33. YES Outdoors
34. Islington People's Rights Spear
35. Spear

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