



# MAKING THE MOST OF FREE TIME

*A consultation with Islington's young people*





***Islington Giving is an independent group of local trusts, foundations, businesses and voluntary organisations who have come together to shine a light on poverty and inequality in Islington, where many residents are locked out of the opportunities that the borough offers.***

***Underpinning Islington Giving is local knowledge and a belief that everyone can give and make a difference. We have raised over £4 million since September 2010 which we are investing in young people and supporting residents to make the best of Islington's opportunities.***

**GET IN TOUCH:**



020 7288 6941



MAIL@ISLINGTONGIVING.ORG.UK



ISLINGTONGIVING.ORG.UK



@ISGIV

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# INTRODUCTION

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***Islington Giving has invested in young people since our launch in 2010. Young people told us that they wanted to do more at the weekends when most activities were closed.***

From Saturday Night Out at the Sobell Centre which has attracted 400 young people to Friday Night Out with Arsenal in the Community, Islington Giving has opened venues and tested new ways of giving young people opportunities to make the most of their free time. Mentoring Works launched in September 2014 now brings young people into businesses so that they can step into the world of work.

We wanted to know more about how to support young people to get the best out of Islington. In May 2015 Islington Giving asked researchers – Kaizen Partnership – to talk to Islington’s young people and ask them what they did with their free time, what they thought of the activities arranged for them, and what could be better. We were interested in the views of young people aged 12-18 living regular Islington lives.

Considerable resources go into providing youth activities in Islington. Across the borough youth hubs, voluntary sector projects and after-school activities combine to create what looks like a wealth of youth activity. And yet these sessions can be poorly attended and the perception remains that Islington’s young don’t have enough to do or are not being offered the right things to do.

Kaizen did an amazing job for us. Over a six week period they spoke to 340 young people across Islington using a range of methods, including going out onto the streets – often in evenings and at weekends – talking to young people wherever they found them – at bus stops, on the streets, and in parks.

Kaizen’s energy and innovation paid off. Their work has given us a robust set of recommendations, rooted in the opinions of Islington’s young people. We are already using their findings to shape our future support for young people and to spark fresh discussions with partners. Better still, Kaizen has identified a group of young people who wish to continue to be involved in our decision-making – we look forward to working with them.

This is a summary of the key findings of the research and sets out our evolving ideas on how we can address them. You can download the full report and find out more about our work on our website – [islingtongiving.org.uk](http://islingtongiving.org.uk).

**DOWNLOAD  
THE FULL REPORT ON:  
[ISLINGTONGIVING.ORG.UK](http://ISLINGTONGIVING.ORG.UK)**



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# WHO WE SPOKE TO

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*Over a six week period in summer 2015 we spoke to over 340 young people (aged 12-18) in Islington. We used a range of consultation methods, including individual surveys, street and traditional focus groups and interviews with youth professionals.*

Our main target was young people living everyday lives, i.e. not those experiencing acute deprivation or other extremely challenging circumstances. For the purposes of this consultation, the definition of an “Islington young person” was anyone who lives, studies, or has a strong connection to the borough.

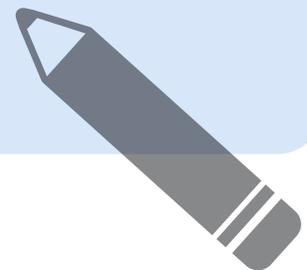
**WE SPOKE TO  
340 YOUNG PEOPLE:**

**200 individual surveys**

**39 street focus groups**

**4 focus groups**

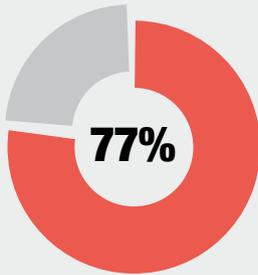
**7 practitioner  
interviews**



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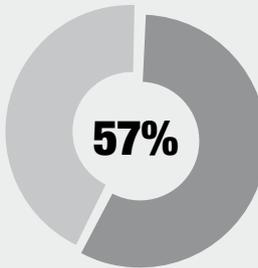
# WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR

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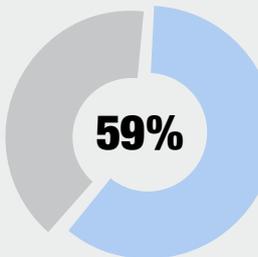
## **WANT TO DO MORE WITH THEIR FREE TIME**

There is a strong desire on the part of young people to be involved in activities and projects outside of school hours. While many have attended some youth provision – and half attend regularly – 77% said they would like to take part in more activities especially at the weekends and holidays.



## **NEED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT'S ON**

Most of those we spoke to agreed that, whilst Islington offered many activities and opportunities, awareness of them was low: 57% knew “only a little”, “not much” or “nothing at all” about what was on offer. The professionals we spoke to acknowledged that they needed to learn more about using social media to promote activities.



## **WANT MORE AT WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS**

When asked about funding priorities, 59% of the young people who responded wanted to see money directed towards weekend and holiday activities.

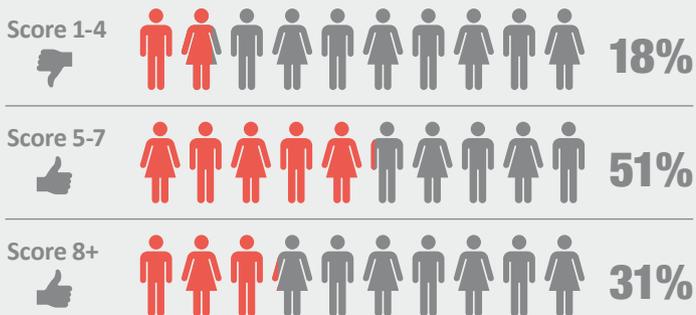
# HOW THEY RATE ISLINGTON

## *Islington's young people are positive about their borough.*

The young people we interviewed were positive about their experience of attending out-of-school activities and their experience of Islington.

Asked to score Islington 1-10, the vast majority (82%) of those we spoke to gave a positive score (5+) and almost a third (31%) gave the borough a very high score (8+). Only 10% gave a poor score of 3 or less.

### YOUNG PEOPLE WERE ASKED TO RATE ISLINGTON ON A SCALE OF 1-10



### YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO INFLUENCE WHAT GETS FUNDED

Many of the young people we spoke to said they would be keen to stay in the conversation about funding choices.

We believe Islington Giving should consider involving young people in its decision-making to benefit young people and provide powerful opportunities for youth development.



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# WHAT THEY WANT

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***Islington's young people want training, support and opportunities that will help them move forward in life.***

Islington's young people are very diverse. They need a menu of activities to suit all interests and backgrounds.

Many of the young people we spoke to showed an interest in activities that would help them develop skills and confidence. More generally, they wanted high quality activities that were interesting and fun.

**53% SAID THEY WANTED CAREER SUPPORT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

**65% SAID THEY WANTED MORE SPORT**

**47% SAID THEY WANTED MORE FUNDING FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

**46% SAID THEY WANTED MORE CREATIVE ACTIVITIES**

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# WHAT INFLUENCES THEM?

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***With over three quarters of the young people we spoke to saying that they wanted to do more with their free time, we were keen to explore what was getting in their way and what influences their decisions.***

We heard many say that there were not enough free activities in Islington and 30% said that cost deterred them from taking up opportunities. This is in part a misperception as most public and voluntary sector run activities are free or have a nominal charge. However, given the increasing impact of benefit cuts it is likely that cost will become a greater factor over the coming years.

The majority of young people we spoke to felt that awareness of what activities were available for them was low.

Almost a quarter (23%) said that parents had a big influence on which activities they participated in.

**41% SAID NOT ENOUGH TIME**



**30% SAID NOT ENOUGH MONEY**



**34% SAID THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS ON**



**23% SAID PARENTS' VIEWS MATTERED**



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# HOW WE WILL RESPOND

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*How we are going to work with others to provide:*



## **MORE ACTIVITIES AT THE WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS**

Young people have clearly told us they want to do more at weekends and during school holidays. Islington Giving is keen to work with organisations to unlock Islington when most facilities are closed to young people. Contact us now if you are ready to run activities at these times.



## **HELP WITH COSTS AND RESOURCES**

Young people have told us that cost stops them from taking part in activities. In Islington 40% of young people live in poverty and 33% live in overcrowded conditions. Islington Giving will set up a new Young Catalyst Fund, to provide small sums of money to ensure that young people can benefit from the best activities that the borough has to offer.



## **BETTER INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT'S ON**

Young people say they don't know what is on offer and parents are not well informed about these activities. Islington Giving will collaborate with others to provide a 'What's On' for parents and young people.



## **STEPS TO THE WORLD OF WORK**

Islington Giving will expand our mentoring programmes to provide careers advice, work experience and skills development.

# ISLINGTON GIVING



In partnership with:



Islington Giving  
13 Elliott's Place  
London N1 8HX

T: 020 7288 6941  
[www.islingtongiving.org.uk](http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk)

Registered charity number: 207499