



**“It is empowering to be able to make a big decision that will impact hundreds of young people”**

**Izzy Petriti**  
Young Grant Maker Co-Lead



## INTRODUCTION

# A word from our Young Grant Maker Co-Leads:

**There have been many things that have made 2023 a difficult year for young people in Islington. With rising costs contributing to deepening inequality and the impact of national and global events, things can feel increasingly tough.**

But working with this year's cohort of Young Grant Makers has been an opportunity to continue doing work that makes a difference, inspiring young people to have a voice on issues that affect their lives.

We have enjoyed watching this group of Young Grant Makers develop and grow, both in their confidence and in the decisions they make. It has been inspiring to see them fight for what they believe in and make their voices heard in the space.

Through the process, we heard from many amazing projects working to make Islington a safer and more enjoyable place for the young people who live here. But, there was a lot we couldn't fund. A combined effort is needed to put more resources into youth services, create more opportunities – particularly around employment – and create more awareness of what is already on offer for young people in the borough.

Listening directly to what young people want and involving them more actively in decision-making processes can significantly improve opportunities for Islington's youth. Empowering young individuals who possess a profound understanding of the borough and a strong commitment to social change to take lead roles in decision-making can enable them to shape a better society for themselves and the next generations. Young people in Islington need to be listened to more and the adults of Islington should realise that our young people are the next generation, so we should all do what we can to support them!

We hope you enjoy reading more about Islington Giving's work over the past year, and we look forward to continuing our involvement in making Islington a more equal borough.

**Izzy Petriti and Freya Johnson**



## Why Islington?

In 2023, our parent charity, Cripplegate Foundation, commissioned a community-led research project to listen and learn from residents. Through interviews and focus groups, researchers considered how people's lives have changed in the borough over the last ten years.

A diverse place with lots to offer residents, the research showed that people in Islington have a strong sense of community and a desire to help their neighbours. However, participants felt there are "two Islington" – one for those who have money, and one for those who do not.

Overall, findings suggested worsening inequality, with mental health being a particularly large concern. Isolation, loneliness and poor mental health are significant issues for people living here.

Read the full report



**"You can see the poverty line, the divide in a way, it's quite apparent from looking at two different areas"**

**"Everyone has the right to live somewhere that's decent and fit for purpose"**

**"[Funders should] help local people come up with solutions – from the bottom up."**

**Insights from Participants of the 'Challenging Inequality' Community Research Report**

## The numbers

**216,600**  
people live in Islington.



Islington has the highest proportion of clients with pay day loan debts and rent arrears in London.

Islington has some of the wealthiest residents in London, yet it is also the 6th most deprived borough.

Only 13% of the borough's land is public green space.



**37%**  
of children live in poverty – the 4th highest rate in the UK.



**1 in 5**  
people in Islington are living with a disability.



**34%**  
of older people live in poverty, and 41% of older people live alone.

About 1 in 6 (30,000) Islington adults have depression, anxiety or both.



### Sources

'Challenging Inequality' Cripplegate Foundation Community Research Report  
Trust for London  
Islington Together 2030 Plan, Islington Council



# Working together to achieve positive change

Islington Giving is a coalition of local people and organisations working together to raise funds, support communities and connect to each other in Islington. With the support of our parent charity, Cripplegate Foundation, and one of our founding partners, City Bridge Foundation, we work to bring about change that makes Islington a more equal place.

In 2022 we set our new strategic priorities. Following are some examples of how we have been working towards these over the past year.

## Increasing access to opportunities

We work to increase access to opportunities and services that help people in Islington live a good life.

- In its second year, the Make it Happen Fund supported 30 inspiring ideas and community activities. Projects included a photography competition, activities for care home residents, and cultural cooking workshops. Currently funded alongside our Housing Association partners, Peabody, Hyde Housing, Southern and Clarion, we are hoping to welcome new partners in 2024 to grow the initiative.
- Following a successful pilot, in 2023 we agreed a further 3-year partnership with Macquarie to facilitate work placements for young people in partnership with People's Place Community Partnership, Local Village Network, Creative Opportunities and Islington Council. Since the start of the programme, more than 40 students have completed placements with local businesses.

## Raising funds

We aim to raise more funds to support local projects that respond to local need and create a greater sense of community in Islington.

- Thanks to our coalition and corporate partners, trusts and foundations and the generosity of local people, we raised £1.01m to support the local community in 2023.
- We believe in partnerships and are grateful to work with many organisations dedicated to creating lasting positive change in the borough. Just one example of this in 2023 was our collaboration with Camden Giving to provide funding for local food services supporting people impacted by the cost of living crisis, thanks to a significant grant from Google.org. Read more on page 18.

## Reducing isolation and creating community connections

We aim to reduce isolation and foster connections, so that people in Islington are more connected to each other, their community and local services and support.

- Thanks to an incredible response to our appeal, we were able to support more than 400 local people through the cost of living crisis in 2022/3, working with 20 local partner organisations to provide emergency cash grants.
- We have been funding Help on Your Doorstep's Good Neighbours Schemes, alongside Peabody and Islington Council, since 2011. The scheme now provides over 1200 residents each year with opportunities to come together, build networks of support and learn new skills.
- In 2023 we launched the Mind the Gap fund, which aims to improve access to mental health support for people experiencing homelessness. Read more on page 14.

## Sharing power

We share decision making with residents, to distribute power more equally and support more residents to develop skills to influence decision-making.

- In 2023, for the first time, our Young Grant Makers programme was led by two former panellists. 12 new Young Grant Makers joined our team to learn about grant making and make final funding decisions about projects supporting young people in the borough.
- We also ran the second Golden Grant Makers programme, testing a different approach to engage older panellists, and received funding to embark on exciting new initiatives. Read more on pages 20-23.

## Sharing learning

As a coalition, we share our learning widely, to support and positively influence our public and voluntary sector peers.

- We facilitated spaces and events for over 60 grantees and community members to share insights, create new connections and offer feedback on our processes.
- Our Young Grant Maker Co-Leads joined a panel at City Bridge Foundation's City Giving Day event and we hosted two sessions at the London Funders Festival of Learning.
- We regularly convened with our Giving Scheme movement peers through the growing London's Giving network.

**I have been attending the lunch club for over a year now. It gives me time for myself, and I have made some lovely new friends. When I go back home, I feel refreshed."**

**Good Neighbours Scheme member and carer for her husband**





## In 2023...

**£1.01m**

raised to be channeled into the Islington community

**151**

grants awarded or active

**105**

organisations supported with core and project funding

**22**

residents directly involved in grant-making, with more consulted through outreach

**3,700**

hours of volunteering leveraged through the BIG Alliance.

**23,000\***

local residents accessed Islington Giving funded projects and services

(\*some people will have attended multiple projects)

With the support of our parent charity, Cripplegate Foundation and one of our Founding partners, City Bridge Foundation, 100% of the funds we raise go to local projects, helping to create connections, increase support and advice in the borough, increase access to opportunities and spark joy.



### Partner spotlights

## Cook for Good

Cook for Good works to tackle food insecurity, barriers to work and social isolation on the Priory Green Estate. Their projects include a surplus-food pantry where members pay just £3.50 to choose a basket of shopping, free cooking classes and community meals, and hospitality training.

Our partnership with Cook for Good has included supporting The Islington Community Brigade alongside The Arsenal Foundation – a six-month course teaching catering and hospitality skills to twelve local people – and The Men’s Grub Club, funded by our Golden Grant Makers.

The Men’s Grub Club is a programme for older men on the estate, particularly those who are retired, living alone, and socially isolated. The men come together to learn cooking skills and gain confidence, including how to get the best out of using the pantry, how to batch cook, and how to eat healthily on a budget. Members also eat together after the session, offering a chance to socialise and get to know each other.

### Who is accessing Cook for Good community?

- **84% are unemployed, retired or have ill health that prevents them from working**
- **41% struggle to pay for food**
- **65% report feeling isolated.**

**“I keep a poster of The Grub Club up in my kitchen, and it always puts a smile on my face.”**

**Grub Club member**

**“Our gents have come such a long way since their first sessions. We’re so proud of them – and what’s lovely is, they are so proud of each other.”**

**Grub Club Project Leader**

### Partner spotlights

## Mother to Mother – Islington Mind

Mother to Mother brings together isolated mothers and other women who are caregivers of people with mental health problems.

The project is led by a psychotherapist in a small therapy group, offering a space where the women can share experiences, explore their feelings and be empowered by each other. The group also provides wellbeing activities, practical advice to navigate crises and respite outings.

**“Mother to Mother offers Miriam one day a week that is ‘just for her’”**

### Miriam’s story

Miriam, age 65, cares for a son with a severe mental health diagnosis. Miriam and her son shared a one-bedroom flat and her responsibilities were putting a big strain on her own health, both physically and mentally.

Miriam was signposted to Mother to Mother following some time in hospital. She now attends sessions regularly and enjoys the relaxed atmosphere of sharing tea, lunch and a chat in the informal setting where the group meets. It is in this safe space Miriam was able to talk about her son’s declining mental health, and the detrimental effect it was having on her. Miriam was offered specialist support to assess risks and practical support to find new housing. She now feels less alone in facing these challenges.

Miriam regularly joins Mother to Mother outings such as trips to Kew Garden, where she has particularly enjoyed the art and kitchen garden and the relaxed walks. She values the one day a week that is ‘just for her’.



# Bridging the gap in mental health services

**Local people who are at risk of homelessness and experiencing co-existing disadvantages face a gap in mental health provision.**

Consultation with voluntary groups and statutory organisations showed us that although there are many amazing projects in Islington, some mental health projects and services are not accessible to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. For these people, who often have complex needs – including substance abuse and being in contact with the criminal justice system – the gap in provision negatively impacts potential for recovery.

The Mind the Gap programme, made possible through a generous grant by Google.org, aims to help bridge this gap by funding advocacy, advice to access and navigate mental health services or direct therapeutic provision.

We are working with the groups funded through this programme to learn more about where the gaps and challenges are, and how we can work together to advocate for wider system-change to improve mental health support for people who experience homelessness in Islington.



**“I greatly appreciate the efforts and care the team has put towards our well-being. The sessions are very supportive and encouraging to people who struggle to cope with their traumas like me.”**

Participant of KMEWO counselling sessions



## Lara's Story,

## KMEWO

When Lara was referred to KMEWO's counselling services by the organisation's crisis team she had experienced a number of painful and traumatic events in her life, including being a survivor of forced marriage and domestic violence.

Lara needed a safe space to talk and reflect upon her trauma and fear, and the challenges of adapting to a new setting and an insecure future. During Lara's first counselling session, she was unable to express her emotions, indicating that, in the past, everyone had judged her and did not accept her for who she was. Slowly, she built trust with her counsellor and expressed that she felt supported, heard, and respected.

"The counselling provided reassurance and support so that I could make sense of my journey—and protect myself." Lara.

Therapy created a safe space where Lara was able to mourn her loss, open up about painful memories, and process her feelings. The sessions helped Lara accept who she is and understand her rights. Alongside wellbeing activities, they gave her the support she needed to make sense of her journey and protect herself.

Lara is now studying at college, has a part-time job and is working towards becoming a nurse.

## About KMEWO

KMEWO (Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation) is dedicated to improving the quality of life of Kurdish, Middle Eastern and North African (KMENA) women in Islington, and London more widely, who have experienced domestic abuse and faced other harmful practices. Now 25 years old, KMEWO, an organisation led by and for black and minoritised women, offers holistic support in a safe and confidential space.

## Mind the Gap funded projects

**Single Homeless Project** One-to-one and group therapy sessions for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

**The Manna** A pilot project with Islington GPs to support people who are homeless to access mainstream health and mental health services.

**Kurdish Middle Eastern Women's Organisation** Mother tongue counselling sessions for women facing homelessness due to experiences of violence, who may have no recourse to public funds.

**Street Talk** One-to-one counselling sessions for women involved in exploitative prostitution or trafficking, who are likely to have a range of other complex needs.

**Islington Mind** Targeted housing support to adults in Islington who live with mental ill-health and co-existing disadvantages.

**Stonewall Housing** A specialist mental health advocate to support homeless individuals in Islington who identify as LGBTQIA+.

**Brandon Centre** Counselling for young people who are homeless or in hostel accommodation services.

**Street Storage** Mental health advocacy and storage space for people experiencing homelessness.

**Hoarding UK** A 'healthy homes' pilot programme, combining psychotherapy and practical support for people with hoarding behaviour.





# Working together to tackle local food poverty

**With the number of people accessing food banks and support rising drastically due to increasing food and energy prices, local food services have faced unprecedented strain.**

In 2022/3, thanks to a generous grant from Google.org, we worked with the Islington Food Partnership and Camden Giving to distribute £150,000 of funding to food services supporting residents in Islington.

## Stage one

All organisations in Islington providing food and support to those experiencing food insecurity were invited to apply for small grants. This approach also facilitated up-to-date mapping of food services in the borough.

- 29 food services received funding
- Funded services supported over 3000 clients

## Stage two

Aligning with the Islington Food Strategy 2023-2028, the second phase of the Islington Food Fund awarded larger strategic grants to support organisations to become more sustainable and secure.

The Islington Food Strategy focuses on four themes

- Healthy affordable food for all
- Sustainable local food economy
- Climate and nature emergency
- People-powered change



## Funded projects

### Hillside Club House

Cooking skills training for people who experience mental health difficulties – including how to cook on a low budget, reduce food waste and build confidence in their cooking.

**“The workshops were great, they really helped to push me to cook for myself.”**

### Mildmay Community Partnership

An accredited training programme exploring how communities can build organic local food systems to revitalise depleted soils and tackle food insecurity.

**“It was almost magic to learn how nature creates good soil. We are all excited to trial out bits together at the community garden!”**

### Manor Gardens Welfare Trust

Establishing a local food co-op providing affordable, sustainable food that meets the diverse needs of North Islington’s multi-ethnic communities. The co-op also offers activities such as yoga, seasonal celebrations and coffee mornings to cultivate a sense of community and well-being.

**“I have three children, and my husband is disabled. I can’t go out for an extended period, so having a local food co-op round the corner is brilliant. I can buy lots of things for £3 and the staff are really helpful.”**

**Thanks to additional funding from Google.org, we will be running the Islington Food fund again in 2024.**



# Resident-led giving: testing new approaches

In 2023 we continued our journey of resident-led grant making, working with local people who access and take part in the projects we fund to help us make decisions about how our grants are awarded. To date we have engaged 100 local residents in grantmaking to award more than £1.1 million to local groups.

**100 local residents have now awarded more than £1.1 million to local groups.**

## Golden Grant Makers

The Golden Grant Makers' programme offers residents over 55 the opportunity to fund projects and services benefitting older people in Islington. This year, we tested ways to reduce barriers to participation for older residents and gather insights from a wider range of residents.

We held outreach sessions at six local community groups, meeting over 80 local older people in places they were already accessing, to hear about their experiences of living in Islington and their priorities for making positive changes.

The sessions also allowed us to introduce the programme to residents in-person and offer additional support to those interested in joining the decision-making panel.

**"I have enjoyed learning about other people and sharing a common sense of purpose"**

2023 GGM panellist

## Young Grant Makers

In 2023, for the first time, the Young Grant Makers programme was led by two former panellists. Their experience of the programme and passion for making a difference for young people in their borough infused the programme with even more energy.

**"This role has been extremely rewarding to me. I started with very little facilitation experience and now I have the experience and feel confident leading activities and controlling a space."**

Freya Johnson  
YGM Programme Co-Lead

**"I have learnt more about challenges in professional settings and how I navigate them, for example mediating and solving conflicts and managing and checking in with people."**

Izzy Petriti  
YGM Programme Co-Lead

# The future of resident-led programmes at Islington Giving

As part of our strategy we are committed to expanding the ways that residents can engage in and inform Islington Giving's work and to learn from new approaches to resident-led grant making.

## The Carers Fund

There are around 16,300 unpaid carers in Islington. Carers are disproportionately affected by poverty, poor mental health and isolation, but their voices are often left out of decision-making processes.

The Carers Fund was co-developed with local carers and carers' groups to understand what support and opportunities they want to see more of in the borough. In 2024, we will work with a small steering group to make decisions about how funding should be spent.

*Funded by the Mercers' Company*

## Intergenerational Panel

The Intergenerational panel will bring together older and younger residents to fund services and opportunities in the borough. We hope that working in this way will contribute to a more connected and understanding community, and help to counter respective negative attitudes towards older and younger people.

The project will follow in the footsteps of brilliant work in this area, including 'Generations Working Together' in Scotland, and projects as part of the National Lottery Community Fund's Ageing Better programme.

*Funded by City Bridge Foundation*

**"Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations."**

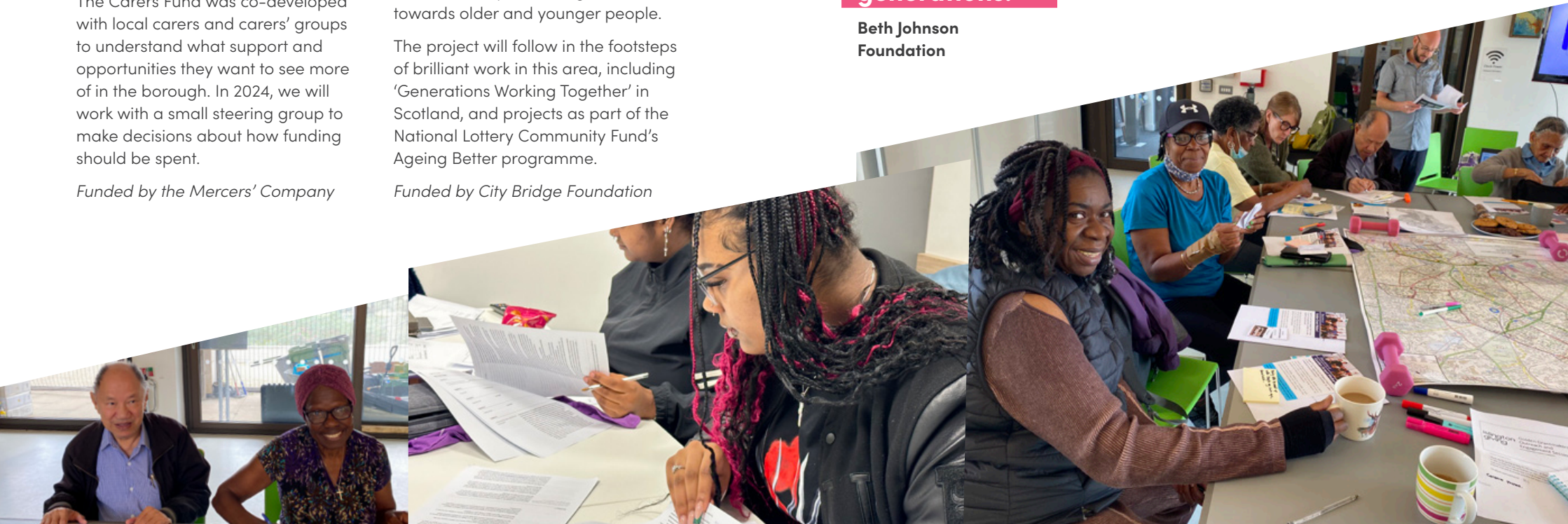
**Beth Johnson  
Foundation**

## Alumni Project

We know that as residents come to the end of a grant-making programme, they are feeling inspired, empowered and many are actively seeking further opportunities to create change.

The Alumni Project aims to create a community of resident grant makers, and to offer access to further training and opportunities to use the skills they have developed. The project will be shaped with the help of former panellists and partner organisations.

*Funded by City Bridge Foundation*



# Working together for a more equal Islington

**Working in partnership we believe we can foster more effective, meaningful social change locally than we could individually.**

Our Coalition Partners are a group of local businesses and philanthropic funders who sit on the Islington Giving board and help us to shape the focus of our work.

They contribute both financially and towards our joint values and vision of making Islington a more equal place, where everyone can thrive.

Here, we are shining a light on two of our founding partners: Cloudesley and The Morris Charitable Trust.

## Cloudesley

Cloudesley is an independent charitable trust that has been operating in the borough for over 500 years, providing support for Islington's residents and churches. Cloudesley's support has provided deep local knowledge and helped us to shape our work. Their core funding has enabled us to test new approaches and deliver cornerstone programmes.

**"As a local grant-making trust with clearly defined charitable objectives, Cloudesley's involvement with Islington Giving enables us to reach more people locally through the additional funds Islington Giving brings into the borough. It is also good to be part of and learn from new approaches, such as the participatory grant making programmes that Islington Giving continues to develop each year."**

Sharon White,  
Cloudesley Trustee

## The Morris Charitable Trust

The Morris Charitable Trust, funded by the Morris Family and Business Design Centre (BDC), have been instrumental in bringing the vision of the original Islington Giving campaign to life.

As with all our Coalition Partners, this partnership goes well beyond the core funding provided. We have benefitted from BDC staff fundraising – including an Angel-to-Angel bike ride, marketing support, strategic insights, and networks – all of which help us to work towards our aims.

**"Our partnership with Islington Giving goes much further than just funding. We do a lot of close collaboration, and it means a lot to our team to be able to support the community we work and live in."**

Kate Vandenburg,  
Morris Charitable Trust  
and BDC



# Sparking moments of joy

In winter 2023, we launched a campaign to make connections, spark joy and change lives in Islington.

Thanks to the generosity of our community – we raised over £18,000 to support local projects changing lives in Islington.

As part of this campaign, we asked you to share a message of joy or kindness to a neighbour who might be lonely or going through a difficult time. Small actions can have a big impact, and a few kind words could transform someone's day, helping them to feel less alone.

The responses were so incredible, we decided to extend the project across the borough through a digital campaign, alongside funding local projects working to tackle loneliness and isolation.

See the heartwarming messages being shared by Islington neighbours



# Our Supporters

We are grateful to our dedicated partners for their ongoing support and collaboration

## Coalition Partners

City Bridge Foundation	Cloudesley
Cripplegate Foundation	Macquarie Group Foundation
The Morris Charitable Trust (BDC)	Peabody Community Foundation
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	

## Other Key Supporters in 2023

Islington Council	Clarion Futures
Arsenal Foundation	Southern Housing Group
The Mercers' Company	Newlon Housing Trust
Google.org	Central District Alliance
Argent	Euromonitor
Islington Dispensary Fund (Mildmay Institutions)	Angel BID
The Black Hill Charitable Trust	Angel Central
The Amber Trust	Vital Energi
Frederick's	John P Murray Charitable Trust
Hyde Housing	ARK Co-working
Open Creates	Liz Airey & Paul Murray Charitable Trust

## THANK YOU

A huge thank you also to all our regular and one-off supporters, who have contributed over £117,500 to our work this year.

"Since the beginning of our partnership, Islington Giving have helped us achieve our social value commitments with great ease."

It has been an absolute pleasure working with the team and I feel honoured to be able to see first hand the positive impact they have in the local community and on so many people's lives. We look forward to carrying on our working relationship for years to come."

Ben Pasifull  
Vital Energi

# Creating a greater sense of community

We work with incredible partners across the borough. Tackling important issues through a wide range of approaches, supporting and bringing joy to Islington's diverse community, our partners each contribute to creating a stronger, more connected community where everyone has the chance to live a good life.

## Grantees by Funding Programme

- Crisis Grants
- Disability Fund
- Food Fund
- Islington Giving
- Young Grant Makers
- Golden Grant Makers
- Mind the Gap

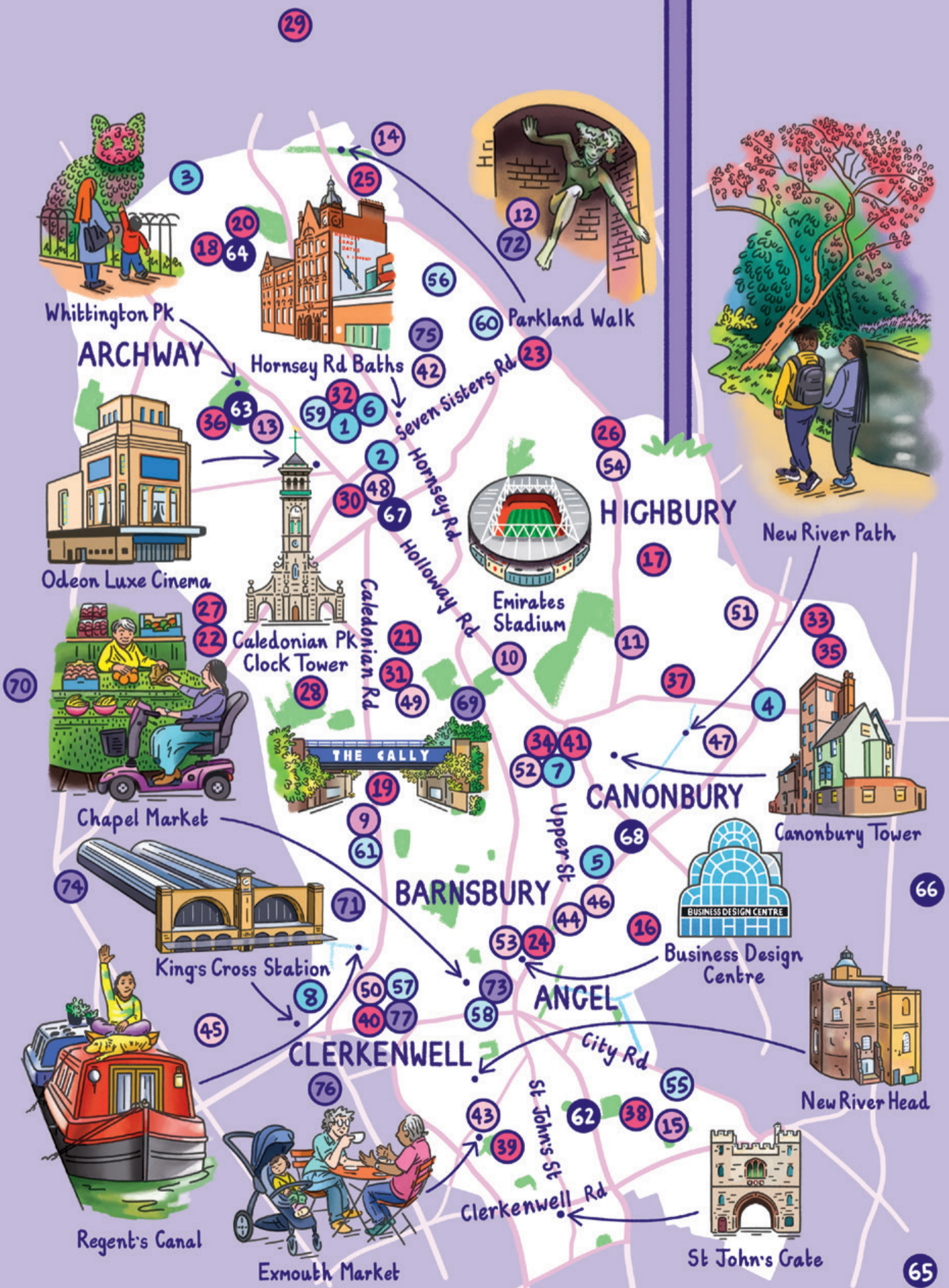
In addition, we also award microgrants to groups of residents and individuals through the Make It Happen Fund and Catalyst Grants.

Map: Copyright Siôn Ap Tomos

"I used to have no hope that I could belong somewhere. Now Mondays give me hope. Coming to the New Art Studio I can express myself in colour and shapes even when I can't find the words."

Ayse, New Art Studio

# ISLINGTON





# Grantees

1 Age UK Islington

2 Eritrean Community in the UK (ECUK)

3 Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association

4 IMECE Women's Centre

5 Islington Centre for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

6 Islington People's Rights

7 RCJ Advice Citizens Advice Islington

8 Say it Loud Club

9 Artbox London

10 Company 3

11 Daylight Studio

12 Eritrean Youth Club

13 South Islington Stroke Club

14 St Mary's Church Hornsey Rise

15 WeSwim CIC

16 Arc Community Space CIC

17 Bags of Taste

18 Caxton House Community Centre

19 Chabad Lubavitch of Islington

20 Choices

21 Church Of The Most Sacred Heart Of Jesus

22 Cut Moose

23 Finsbury Park Mosque

24 Go Dharmic

25 Hanley Crouch Community Association

26 Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

27 Hilldrop Community Centre

28 Hillside Clubhouse

29 Hive Food Bank

30 Holloway SDA Church

31 Light Project Pro International

32 Manor Gardens Welfare Trust

33 Mildmay Community Partnership

34 Miracles

35 Newington Green Action Group

36 Pro Touch SA

37 St Jude and St Paul's PCC

38 St Luke's Parochial Trust

39 The Peel Institute Company

40 The Sapphire Employability and Wellbeing Academy

41 Union Chapel

42 Abianda

43 Body & Soul

44 The BIG Alliance

45 Global Generation

46 Help on Your Doorstep

47 Home-Start Camden and Islington

48 Kinship

49 SEN Family Saturdays

50 The Parent House

51 Creative Opps CIO

52 Islington Council

53 Local Village Network

54 Peoples Place Community Partnership CIC

55 All Change Arts

56 Community Language Support Services

57 Cook for Good

58 Cubitt Artists

59 Healthy Generations

60 Park Theatre

61 Stuart Low Trust

62 HoardingUK

63 Islington Mind

64 Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation in Britain (KMEWO)

65 Stonewall Housing

66 Street Storage

67 Street Talk

68 The Manna

69 Big Ideas

70 Brandon Centre

71 Eat Club

72 Fully Focused

73 Jubba Youth Community Association

74 LMK (Let Me Know)

75 Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation (MEWSO)

76 Single Homeless Project

77 YES Outdoors

**“I love being a part of Islington Giving! Giving through Islington Giving connects us to organisations in our neighbourhood doing important work that we would find hard to discover by ourselves. They are the experts, and so we know our money is being put towards delivering amazing impacts in partnership with brilliant grassroots organisations on issues we care about – the future of young people, families struggling, loneliness. They’ve made it incredibly easy to participate in high-integrity, innovative philanthropy that is making a difference, creating an Islington community that is better for everyone in it.**

**What’s not to love?”**

Sarah, Dom, Leonie & Jesse  
Long-standing Islington Giving supporters.

islington  
giving

For further information please visit:  
[www.islingtongiving.org.uk](http://www.islingtongiving.org.uk)

13 Elliott’s Place  
Islington  
London  
N1 8HX

  @isgiv

  Islington Giving

Islington Giving is a restricted fund of Cripplegate Foundation,  
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