

A group of five people are standing in a kitchen. Three women in the foreground are wearing blue hairnets and blue aprons over their clothing. A man in a red shirt and a grey cap stands behind them. They are all smiling at the camera. The kitchen has wooden cabinets, a white tiled backsplash, and various kitchen items like a toaster, a blender, and a coffee machine are visible.

Beyond Housing:
G15 Community Impact report 2023



Contents

Introduction	2	MTVH Case Study:	
Foreword	4	MTVH Food Hubs (London)	17
Context	5	Network Homes Case Study:	
G15 community investment in numbers	6	The Miyawaki Project	19
		Notting Hill Genesis Case Study:	
PROJECTS/CASE STUDIES		The Business Incubator	21
A2Dominion Case Study:		Peabody Case Study:	
Winter Wellness Campaign	7	Advice Hub	23
Catalyst Case Study:		Southern Housing Case Study:	
Wellbeing Hubs (Spaces)	9	Increase Programme (residents' enterprise training and small business support)	25
Clarion Case Study:			
Emergency Cost of Living Fund	11	Conclusion	26
Hyde Case Study:			
Advice and Advocacy (Wellbeing)	13	ABOUT THE G15	27
L&Q Case Study:			
Get Set Go!	15		

INTRODUCTION

Fiona Fletcher-Smith

Chief Executive, L&Q and G15 Chair

This year has been a difficult one - the cost of meeting life's essentials has increased, and it's affecting everyone. Social housing residents, who experience higher rates of poverty on average than those living in other tenures, have been disproportionately affected by this.

As housing associations, we are about so much more than simply handing over a set of keys and collecting rent. Providing support to those who need it, and investing in communities, is at the heart of our model.

Through this report we see how members are tackling the issues that affect our residents – from food insecurity and unemployment to financial hardship and social isolation. We've seen a diverse menu of support options made available over the last 12 months responding to resident and community need. From Clarion's emergency fund and Catalyst's wellbeing project to MTVH's food hubs and A2Dominion's cost-of-living packages – G15 members are stepping up to support those at the sharp end of the crisis.

G15 members have a broader role, building the capacity of local voluntary organisations that add value to the places where we operate. This report showcases the breadth of activities and interventions provided by the G15 alongside local partners, demonstrating why strong partnership working is crucial to delivering impactful services.

Together, these programmes make me feel hopeful about the future of the G15 – and our continued ability to be significant levers of change for our communities.



INTRODUCTION

Fayann Simpson

Chair of Resident Services Board & Group Board Member, L&Q

All G15 members are acutely aware that these are uniquely challenging times for residents. Inequalities are widening, food bank usage is rising, and budgets are being stretched.

Now, more than ever, we must ensure that residents' voices are being heard and listened to, and resources are targeted where they are needed most.

The cost-of-living support provided by the G15 has been a vital lifeline, as members repurposed community investment budgets to support residents, communities and voluntary, grassroots organisations.

One of our biggest advantages is the multiple touch points we have with our residents throughout their tenancies. Every chance we have to speak to someone provides us with an opportunity to see how they're doing and ask if they need help.

Alongside the cost of living, climate change remains one of the most pressing issues facing society. There is a growing interest from residents in what their landlords are doing to combat climate change, and the benefits this will bring to their homes, bills and communities. We must work with residents, in partnership, to truly embrace these benefits.

Action on climate change drives positive social change – and the Miyawaki forest project from this report is a great example of this. Mobilised by a shared love of wildlife and their local area, Network Homes' group of conservation volunteers created a diverse multi-layered woodland made up of 600 trees that is providing a green space for community members and residents alike.

I hope this and the other case studies shared here can provide inspiration for even more work like this, designed and delivered in collaboration with residents.



FOREWORD

Matthew Grenier

Business Development Director, HACT

As Fiona notes, this has been yet another difficult year. As the cost-of-living crisis has deepened, so residents and communities have been severely impacted. The stories we have heard about the day-to-day impact of the cost-of-living crisis on individuals, on families and on communities are shocking, scandalous and shameful. The role of housing associations as place-based organisations has never felt so critical nor so important.

The response from G15 members – as is demonstrated through the case studies in this report – has been notable. At HACT, we hear every week about the creativity, resilience and passion of community investment colleagues across the capital. This report highlights the critical role that housing associations continue to play as community anchors.

We have worked with G15 members throughout the year, showcasing the work they have done, inviting their partners to share their approaches and discussing potential collaborative responses that can help their residents through this crisis. We hosted a half-day conference on fuel poverty, ran a series of webinars about innovative tools to support residents and launched the London Food Insecurity Network.

Collaboration and co-designing services with residents, local grassroots organisations and other local stakeholders are fundamental to the approach we need to take to deliver excellence in community investment at a place-based level. At times, this will mean that some housing associations step back and play a supporting role; at others, they will need to step up and take a lead. By being flexible, adaptive and grounding their responses in lived experience, G15 members can support residents through increasingly complex challenges.

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

Our Community Investment role is as important now as it's ever been.

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.

Residents bear the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. In financially challenging times many households face poverty. As a financial ally to residents, we'll help with these acute needs.

A priority for us is creating job opportunities for residents and removing barriers to work. A thriving career provides a significant positive impact on household wealth, wellbeing and social networks.

According to The Institute for Employment Studies / Learning & Work Institute, social housing residents face a structural employment gap. Just over half of social housing tenants are in work (53%) compared with 76% of those owning their own homes or renting privately.

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, 2022/23, the G15 housing association members collectively contributed:

Cost of Living

a Money guidance

Number of projects	67
Number of new cases	23,000
Number of closed cases	9,363

b Food provision

Number of projects	75
Number of people engaged	8,992

HACT social value

(Financial comfort; being able to cope financially; being able to pay for housing costs)

£22,950,903

Employment Support

Number of projects	48
Number engaged	8,483
Number achieving job starts / accredited training	6,486
Number taking up specialisms, e.g. enterprise	1,256

HACT social value

(Progressing into jobs, training, apprenticeships, enterprise)

£427,406,940

Wellbeing

Number of projects	215
Number of people in wellbeing/ support activities	43,354
Number of older people participating in social activities	30,968
Number of young people (under 25s) in support activities, e.g. anti-violence	10,824

HACT social value

(Feeling able to cope with life, improved MH, moderate and frequent exercise)

£79,361,665

Totals

All participants in CI projects
(Total number of people participating in ALL CI projects)

Total community investment expenditure

Total Direct HA investment
(As part of business plan)

Total External funding
(Money brought in)

Total partnership/match funding
(Including in-kind)

Total community support funds/grant giving

172,208

£26,338,761

£30,290,877

£33,557,325

£13,819,445

£6,151,451

A2Dominion Case Study: Winter Wellness Campaign

Project overview

With the cost of living affecting everyone late last year, A2Dominion launched a Winter Wellness Project to support their most vulnerable residents. From a cost-of-living advice booklet and winter wellness packages, to doorstep chats and community events, A2Dominion supported more than 2,000 residents who were either over 75 and living alone, a parent and one child family on Universal Credit or under 25 on Universal Credit.

The detail

- Last Spring, A2Dominion heard from many residents who felt anxious about the coming winter and the cost-of-living crisis. Many were already struggling and felt they would need to choose between heating and eating during the colder months. Recognising how important it was to help their residents stay warm, safe and connected, the Winter Wellness Project was established.
- A cost-of-living booklet was created and sent to every resident they'd identified as being in a priority group. The booklet highlighted A2Dominion's support available along with the government support package, other organisations offering help and a useful list of contacts.
- With the support of their partners, Pyramid Plus, BP, Fortus Recruitment, Huws Gray and Surplus to Supper, over 150 winter wellness packages were sent out. Packages included items to help keep residents warm, such as hot water bottles, blankets, insulated cups, hats, gloves and warm socks.
- A2Dominion also supported residents in their top priority areas of Spelthorne, Ealing, Hillingdon, Oxford and Hounslow by phoning, sending invites to local events, and offering doorstep chats, supporting a total of 938 residents in these areas.
- In total, through the Winter Wellness Project, 2,000 letters and booklets were delivered, 100 residents were offered support over the phone and 39 referrals were made to internal support services, including Money Matters, Digital, Employment and Emotional Wellbeing Support. Additionally, 151 residents attended community events for one-to-one support in money-saving and repair advice in Ealing, Stanwell and Sunbury.
- A total of £2,500 was also secured from the Great Places to Live fund for St Saviour's Church in Sunbury, who offer community sessions to help A2Dominion families with winter fuel top-up payments.



A2Dominion Case Study: Winter Wellness Campaign



Thank you so much A2Dominion! You sent a parcel to my 94-year-old grandmother consisting of a hot water bottle, slippers and blanket. We left her tonight tucked up using everything you sent! What a kind and thoughtful thing to do. We are all very grateful to you.

**Family member of
A2Dominion resident**



Amount Invested

£5,000

Social Value

£409,150

(HACT Social Value Calculator)

Catalyst Case Study: Wellbeing Hubs (Spaces)

Project overview

Understanding the importance of having a warm, welcoming space for their residents to access with accessible support, Catalyst reviewed how their Wellbeing Hubs were being used. After a scoping exercise at each location and using customer insight data, local strategies and customer and stakeholder feedback, they were able to understand wellbeing issues, establish local needs and identify gaps in service provision. The results of each scoping exercise contributed to developing the wellbeing hub provision in each target area, enabling key internal stakeholders 'to get closer to customers.'

The detail

- The aim of the Wellbeing Hubs/spaces was to bring together residents, local charities, external services, and key stakeholders, including local businesses, to develop a one-stop shop of holistic support in the interest of improving the wellbeing of residents. The targeted Wellbeing Hubs in London were at Brent (Church end and Roundwood ward) Friary Park Estate in Acton, Sandringham in Houghton Regis, Ambleside in Luton and Blackbird Leys in Oxford.
- To kick off the project, each Wellbeing Hub started with a launch event. Here, Catalyst residents and the local community are introduced to local partners who can provide financial, emotional, mental, physical, and social wellbeing support. The launch offers providers the opportunity to introduce and promote their services whilst also giving residents the chance to learn about the services available in their local community.
- Following the Wellbeing Hub launch, Catalyst worked closely with their partners and local providers to facilitate an ongoing wellbeing café offer to support the specific needs of the community.
- Each Hub provides a generic overarching wellbeing offer; however, each Hub is uniquely tailored to wellbeing issues and needs of the local community. For example, at the Brent Hub, targeted support combats health inequalities, whereas the Luton Hub focuses on youth and employability support.
- Since the launch of Catalyst's Advice and Wellbeing Service, five dedicated wellbeing spaces have been introduced in Brent, Acton, Luton, Houghton Regis and most recently in Oxford. Working closely and collaboratively with their partners to develop the offer at each location, regular wellbeing cafés and cozy corners are a constant feature. Here residents can drop into a warm and welcoming space for a chat with Catalyst's Advice and Wellbeing and local housing teams, get free refreshments and ask for any support they may need.
- Through the spaces, a network of support has been established for residents, supporting them to connect with local charities and services in their area. The spaces are intended to also provide step-down support to customers who exit one-to-one support from Catalyst's Advice and Wellbeing Service as they move on from problems or crises.



Catalyst Case Study: Wellbeing Hubs (Spaces)

- Overall, through the Wellbeing Hubs, Catalyst has combated each of the key areas of support/needs identified through the following:
 - Reduce health inequalities - free comprehensive health checks introduced
 - Alleviate food and fuel poverty - access to food bank fuel top up and shopping vouchers available
 - Maximise income through financial inclusion and employability support – Ambleside Employability Programme promoted
 - Promote community cohesion - wellbeing café introduced
 - Promote sustainability through greener fuel recycling and upcycling
 - Promote social interaction across a wider demographic - yoga, sewing, intergenerational games, and evening sessions available
 - Support residents to mitigate the rising costs of living - internal wellbeing specialist support and external debt support promoted
 - Target hard-to-reach marginalised groups – men’s health programme introduced.



I love coming to the wellbeing café. I get to socialize, make new friends and participate in all the great activities. I was happy that the debt buster came to Brent as I didn't have to travel to receive advice as it was literally on my doorstep! The goody bag contained a spending diary and budget planner which was very helpful as I manage my budget weekly. It has sections for bills, shopping and utilities, so you can track what you have spent. My appointment with the debt buster advisor helped me prioritise my short-term debts, they offered me a follow-up appointment over the phone for further debt support. I also got support from Brent Hubs who offered advice and provided fuel vouchers.

Jamila, Catalyst resident

Amount Invested

£40,000

was allocated at the wellbeing hubs for:

- Hub launch and themed wellbeing café events e.g., Black History Month and International Women’s Day events
- Marketing and promotional material
- External partner wellbeing programmes
- Ongoing wellbeing café spend e.g., refreshments etc.



Clarion Case Study: Emergency Cost of Living Fund

Project overview

In November 2022, Clarion announced a new £500,000 fund to help residents manage through the cost-of-living crisis. The commitment more than doubled the value of the existing hardship fund run to residents in greatest need. Funding was provided to more than 50 community groups and partners to deliver the following priorities:

- Warm spaces in community centres;
- The expansion of food pantries and other food-related projects in a number of sites across the country;
- 'Cooking on a budget' classes and activities for children and families in Clarion's communities; and
- Warm packs comprising items such as heated blankets, draught excluders and duvets for residents at risk of fuel poverty.



The detail

- This package of support was developed in response to the latest figures from The Clarion Index, an annual survey of 2,000 residents, which found evidence of rising levels of financial instability. According to the research, 85% of Clarion residents were worried about increasing energy bills, with 65% having to cut back on household spending. In addition, 18% had gone without food in the last year because they couldn't afford it, and 12% of residents had used a food bank. The support available included the following:
 - **Warm spaces** - The main aim of the warm spaces project was to support Clarion Community Asset partners and other associated community space partners to provide safe, warm places for Clarion residents and other members of the local community. By offering a grant opportunity to these partners, tailor-made sessions were developed so Clarion residents could walk into a welcoming space without the need to book in advance, and stay for as long as they wanted without the stigma attached to why they were there. On the warm spaces, a warm space attendee said, "this has been a lifeline for me."
 - Through the grants, Clarion was able to financially support the Clarion Community Asset partners and other community partners who are struggling to pay the recent huge increases in their utility bills and help them to increase overall footfall at their centres.
- At the warm spaces, Clarion Partners were able to offer the following:
 - Tea, coffee, biscuits, cakes, snacks and hot meals
 - Equipment and items such as coffee machines, tea urns, bean bags, tablets, games, puzzles, newspapers, magazines, books
 - Additional staffing/volunteer costs for each session
 - Additional energy costs for times the Asset was open for each Warm Space session
 - Energy advice and savings from the Money Guidance team/Digital support
 - Vouchers and signposting such as to pantries and foodbanks, Age Concern, care organisations, voluntary organisations
 - Promotional/advertising material for each Warm Space to include an A-frame promotional board, posters and leaflets
 - Ensuring Clarions Warm Space projects go onto relevant Local Authority lists for providing a Warm Space provision and other national websites such as www.warmspaces.org
 - Wi-Fi
 - Warm packs to take away including, throws/blankets, gloves, hats, cup-a-soup, vouchers, hand warmers, flasks and hot water bottles.

- In total, there were 5,561 visits to a Clarion-funded Warm Space, with 89% of warm space grant recipients signposting attendees to wider support such as housing, health, education, financial, digital, foodbanks, etc. The Warm Space funding allowed for 2,448 additional opening hours at community centres and a total of 115 volunteers supported the Warm Space projects, offering a total of 1,704 volunteering hours to support the Warm Space programme.

Clarion Case Study: Emergency Cost of Living Fund



- Food pantries** - Clarion Futures has long supported various initiatives aimed at tackling food poverty and supporting individuals and families in need. Through the Cost of Living Fund, Clarion supported more community-based organisations to deliver services, enabling households to access subsidised food for a sustained period. The Fund targeted households on the lowest incomes and signposted additional support to address underlying issues.
- Cooking on a budget** - Through the Cost of Living Emergency Fund, Clarion funded a range of face-to-face and digital cooking on a budget course. The aim of the courses was to provide residents who were struggling financially to develop the skills and interest in cooking low-cost, healthy meals to reduce household expenditure. Basic numeracy skills (e.g., weighing, and adapting portion sizes for recipes) were built into the courses as well as budgeting skills. The Clarion Futures Digital team offered further supplementary digital skills courses and device/data loans to those wishing to participate.
- Winter Disconnection Fund** - Through the Cost of Living Emergency Fund, Clarion also supported up to 240 residents at risk of having their gas supply capped due to being unable to afford to put credit on pre-payment gas meters.



The hub has provided me with something to look forward to and attend on a Tuesday morning, I'm really enjoying meeting up with other people to have a chat and play some games which I haven't do so, for a long time. It's great to see the community centre being used for something good after COVID.

I am so glad that Bolton in the Community have opened up the Sutton Centre to local people again, it gives the whole estate something to look forward to attending.

It's nice to just come and listen to people talk whilst I do my jigsaw and having lunch with people and importantly keeping warm.

Warm Space Attendees

Amount Invested

£102,386

was awarded through 28 Warm Spaces Grants to Community Asset partners and Associated Asset partners, from October 2022 to January 2023. £64,056 of additional funding was awarded through 21 extension grants to existing partners during February and March 2023. £120,000 was dedicated to additional food support and food pantries and £20,000 was initially dedicated to the cooking on a budget programme.

Hyde Case Study: Advice and Advocacy (Wellbeing)

Project overview

Like many of our other members, Hyde is committed to making a positive impact in residents' lives and particularly their wellbeing, and through their Advice and Advocacy specialists they do just that. Targeting residents who have a tenancy issue or those who are at risk of developing tenancy issues, Hyde are able to tailor their support to those who need it most.



The detail

- Through their Advice and Advocacy service, Hyde are making a lasting difference to the day-to-day lives of their residents. Additionally, their Early Intervention and Tenancy Sustainment Specialists work with residents to assess their needs, create an action plan and ensure they receive the right level of support to allow them to maintain their tenancies and improve their overall wellbeing. Both services are available across all their geography.
- There are many wellbeing factors that result in a referral to these services for support, including unmanaged care and support needs, mental health issues, physical health problems, disability or learning difficulties, hoarding, care leavers, first tenancy, alcohol or substance use, pregnancy, recently bereaved, threatened by ASB, domestic abuse, temporary and permanent moves, not engaging with Hyde or services and social isolation.
- Referrals are received from customer-facing teams across the wider business, such as the anti-social behaviour team, tenancy management, income, lettings, etc., as well as the team's use of data to identify residents with potential risk factors, e.g., residents under 25 in their first tenancy.
- One-to-one support is available in a variety of formats depending on the needs of the resident, including telephone, video chat, face-to-face, and home visits. In total, 1,621 residents received one-to-one support that focused on improving their health and wellbeing in the past year.
- In addition to the support Hyde provides to residents, they also make referrals and signpost to external support. For health and social care issues, Hyde works collaboratively with GPs, social services/social care teams, occupational therapy and the NHS. In the past year they engaged with 102 GP/Medical services, and 14 social care referrals were completed.
- Working with 3rd sector partners such as Mind, Age UK, CAB, and a range of local partners, Hyde is able to signpost to other support for a range of issues, from mental health and hoarding to supported living and domestic abuse. In the past year, Hyde engaged with 88 statutory/3rd sector support.



Hyde Case Study: Advice and Advocacy (Wellbeing)



Thank you so much for all your support. I had no energy supply since moving in and I was struggling to manage what with working full time and then you called! I honestly don't know what I'd done without you and your patience.

Hyde resident

Thank you so much, now I know there is someone that can help me.

Hyde resident, Mr P, aged 62

I am very grateful to Hyde. I wasn't expecting this kind of support. I am grateful for the cooker and the fridge, and everything else you have done for me.

Hyde Resident, aged 26, with mental health needs who became homeless during the pandemic

Case Study

Mr A was referred to Advice and Advocacy by a Tenancy Officer after they visited due to concerns from neighbours about the condition of the property and garden. On the visit, it was clear Mr A wasn't coping and he wasn't looking after himself. He wasn't washing or eating properly and had no support in place. His home was in an extremely poor condition, and his kitchen and bathroom were unusable. Mr A didn't understand his tenancy agreement, and without support, his tenancy was at risk due to the disrepair of the property and the impact on his neighbours. Mr A agreed he needed help.

A deep clean of the property and work to clear the garden was paid for through Hyde's Successful Tenancies Grant. Referrals were also made to ensure Mr A had wrap-around support. A referral to Hyde repairs team resulted in a new kitchen and bathroom in the property and Mr A was also referred to Social Services with a social care assessment completed. This resulted in a cleaner and carers put in place to ensure his long-term health. Hyde also contacted Mr A's GP, who diagnosed a mild learning difficulty, and he was referred to the social prescribing team for support with his mental health. Mr A was also referred for benefits support, which resulted in him being awarded Personal Independence Payment. Having identified that Mr A's home was too large for him to manage, Mr A was also referred to be re-housed and was accepted back on the housing register to downsize.

Amount Invested

£505,000

L&Q Case Study: Get Set Go!

Project overview

In 2021, the L&Q Foundation kick-started its Get Set Go project with Sport England, supported by the National Lottery. It marked the start of a major new partnership between Sport England and L&Q. The project started during the pandemic when being active and connected within the local community was needed more than ever before.

The detail

- L&Q's Get Set Go programme delivers a range of inclusive sports and fitness activities for all ages to support residents' health and wellbeing, with the aim to increase participation in sports, recreation and other physical activities. The project takes place in and around two of L&Q's biggest estates: the Beaumont Estate in Leyton, Waltham Forest and the Silwood Estate in Rotherhithe, Lewisham.
- The project was co-created with L&Q residents and tailored to their needs to help motivate those less active and reach the most engagement possible. In total, 12 local organisations have been funded to deliver 22 programmes.
- L&Q held two consultation events with over 70 residents to find out what sporting activities they wanted to see delivered. One of the local residents from the Silwood Estate said "sport is an amazing way to improve confidence and build other life skills. It was good to give my views. Personally, I would like to see some more team sports in the area because I play football, but I am also really interested in trying new things, like yoga."
- Listening to what residents told them, L&Q worked with local and larger sports providers to deliver sessions at two activity hubs: the Seddon Centre in Waltham Forest and the Lewington Centre in Lewisham, and additionally delivered sessions in parks, local leisure facilities and schools across both boroughs.

- **Joy Riders** - For children and adults who had never cycled, the Joy Riders eight-week programme took place in a local park and helped participants develop basic skills to ride safely and confidently. For those with some experience, the instructors taught them advanced skills for cycling on off-road routes, such as riding one-handed or whilst looking over their shoulders. Bikes were hired from Peddle My Wheels, a social enterprise, at no cost to residents. Through Joy Riders, 350 people improved their cycling abilities, with 60 people having never ridden before.



- **Football Tournaments** - Over 250 young people took part in two community football tournaments in Waltham Forest. The tournaments took place over two days, with male football on the first, and female football on the second. Alongside the matches, prizes were on offer for skills challenges, and both days ended with medal presentations for the winning teams. Two representatives from the Met Police also attended to help improve community relations and promote a safe environment.
- **Tai Chi** - During the consultation period, one local resident told L&Q they were concerned about the older adults on the estate and wanted to help put on activities that would bring them back together, combat loneliness and increase social cohesion. As a result, Tai Chi sessions were organised. More than 30 older people took part in the sessions across several weeks. Sessions were held at two L&Q activity hubs in Waltham Forest and Lewisham. Tai Chi is both an exercise for improving and maintaining good health, as well as a martial art designed for self-defence. It is also often spoken about as a form of 'meditation in motion' or 'meditation in movement' as it promotes a sense of inner peace and tranquillity.

L&Q Case Study: Get Set Go!



I set myself a goal of learning how to ride a bike after the pandemic. Living alone during Covid, without being able to cycle or drive, left me feeling isolated, claustrophobic and trapped. I would see people riding around in groups and by themselves. I envied the freedom it gave them and decided that was something I wanted for myself.

Firdous, who had not ridden a bike since she was a child, over twenty years ago



Lots of kids don't have chance to do things like this in the holidays, and [it] gives us a chance to make friends. We get to have extra skills training which will help in becoming a pro footballer. We would like more community tournaments, they are good to make friends and socialise.

Prince, aged 14, who has attended Leyton Orient Kickz sessions for nearly three years

Thank you for the Tai Chi sessions on Friday afternoons. I really enjoy them and do not go home and fall asleep in front of the TV as I tend to do on other days. It also gets me out of the house and talking to people, which is good. Hope they carry on for a long time.

Doreen, Silwood Estate Resident

Amount Invested

£380,000

Social Value

£100,000+

of social value has been generated through four projects funded by Get Set Go.



MTVH Case Study: MTVH Food Hubs (London)

Project overview

Recognising the importance of supporting residents during the cost-of-living crisis, MTVH wanted to tackle food insecurities within their communities. They achieved this by offering an array of services, including one-to-one support, leveraging their community centre resources and expanding their pre-existing multi-stakeholder networks.



The detail

- **Lambeth: Brixton** - To help residents in Brixton reduce their food bills, MTV partnered with the Healthy Living Platform and opened a food pantry at the Moorlands estate. The pantry serves 70 residents every week, offering low-cost and culturally appropriate food.
 - Building on this engagement, the food pantry is host to a range of organisations offering advice and support on issues related to the cost-of-living crisis. This includes:
 - Lambeth Wellbeing Bus, offering health advice
 - Lambeth Citizen's Advice Bureau
 - Community Web, offering digital inclusion and skills to access essential online services and opportunities.
 - Throughout winter, MTVH used the community centre as a Warm Hub where residents could come in one day a week, enjoy £1 lunches provided by local volunteers, and sit in a warm space. This initiative was instrumental in addressing isolation, particularly for older residents.
- **Lambeth: Clapham Park** - MTVH and joint venture partner, Countryside Partnerships (Vistry Group) have partnered with local residents and the Lambeth Food Hub to provide a three-course lunch, free, twice per week, serving over 70 residents.
 - The initiative doubled up as a warm space and has created a sense of connectedness that was lost through the Covid-19 pandemic. Like approaches in Brixton and Roundshaw, this hub is a central point for essential services like digital skills with 25 residents engaging in these sessions.
 - To tackle the extreme rise in energy costs, MTVH built on this engagement to deliver energy-saving equipment and energy advice to 120 residents. Lambeth Borough Council trained 20 energy champions who continue to disseminate advice within the community.
 - Recently, Sainsbury's have partnered with MTVH to offer food parcels at the Sainsbury's Local in the center of the estate.
- **Sutton: Roundshaw** - MTVH partnered with the Seventh Day Adventist Charity to run a food hub for 97 residents every week. Local residents have volunteered to deliver these services with MTVH.
 - The Roundshaw partnership includes Trussell Trust, who provide MTVH with long life foods to add to the fresh food served by the Food Hub. This service has grown to provide after-school food for local families and community lunches weekly from our community centre.
 - Christians Against Poverty complements the service at Roundshaw by supporting residents in crisis with skills to manage, and sign-posting them to expert support services.
 - **Additional national partnerships** with organisations like Pocket Power, BBC Children in Need and MTVH's own Tenant Welfare Fund, meant that residents also had access to white goods, furniture, digital equipment, and the opportunity to be supported to switch to more affordable service suppliers so their money could go further.

MTVH Case Study: MTVH Food Hubs (London)



I love coming here and cooking and serving the community, it has given me something worthwhile to do in my retirement and after suffering bereavement.

S, Local volunteer

I am a mother of two and was isolated at home with my children and the only time I go out is taking my daughter to the nursery. Since I started volunteering at the Cube as assistant Chef, I have been active in cooking, make new friends and have learn more skills to what I have.

A F, Local volunteer

I love coming to the community canteen because it's a great way to socialise and make new friends. If it weren't for this, I would have just been sitting at home watching TV all day. Plus, the walk to the canteen helps me get some exercise in.

E, Local resident

The community canteen is a fantastic way to save money on food. I really appreciate the delicious meals that are served here. It's great to have a place where I can enjoy a good meal without breaking the bank.

M, Local resident

Amount Invested

£74,000

secured for food resources and support.

Social Value

MTVH provided use of community center space to value of

£57,600

Network Homes Case Study: The Miyawaki Project

Project overview

Network Homes places a strong emphasis on collaborating closely with residents and striving to prioritise areas of utmost importance to them. A project that exemplifies this commitment, while also aligning with Network Homes' broader Environmental Sustainability Strategy, is The Miyawaki Project, which brought an urban forest to the Brent community.



The detail

- In 2021, Nichola Rogers, an Involved Resident at Network Homes, brought a suggestion: to plant a mini forest (Miyawaki forest) in the local community of Brent. Such mini forests are named after the Japanese botanist Dr Akira Miyawaki and are a method of using a range of native woodland species of trees that would occur naturally in that area by creating a diverse, multi-layered woodland. The trees are planted in an area around the size of a tennis court, at very high densities, that are beneficial to wildlife indigenous to the area.
- Network Homes initiated a partnership with Wates Living Space, Brent Council and residents to plant a new 'Miyawaki' forest at King Edward VII Park in Wembley. It took about 18 months to plan, and on Thursday, 1 December 2022, volunteers gathered to plant 600 trees at the 200 square metre site that will be known as the 'Queen Elizabeth Platinum Jubilee Forest', after the late monarch. Brent Mayor Cllr Abdi Aden and pupils from nearby Park Lane Primary School planted the final trees with all volunteers enjoying well-deserved refreshments!
- The Conservation Volunteers were on hand to provide support throughout the project. They kicked off the day with a briefing for all volunteers to demonstrate the correct way of planting the trees, and continued to provide support and advice during the day.



We're pleased to be working with partners Wates, Brent Council and residents to create this new mini-forest which will benefit the community for generations to come. This is a great example of truly grass roots engagement. I'm very grateful for the original proposal by a resident of Network Homes and the work of so many people who have turned it into reality.

Jamie Ratcliff, Network Homes Executive Director of People, Partnerships and Sustainability

Network Homes Case Study: The Miyawaki Project



The plans for the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Forest have been in development between Wates Living Space, Brent Council and Network Homes for a year and it is a very proud moment for the team to see the plans come to life. We work with social landlords across London to create high quality, safe and sustainable homes for residents and our work gives us a valuable opportunity to work in the wider community and make a positive difference.

James Gregg, Managing Director of South Planned Maintenance at Wates Living Space

Tree planting is fantastic – not only does it suck out CO₂ from the air, but it also creates more vibrant and beautiful spaces that all residents can be proud of. Studies even show that walking through green spaces can improve mental health, so it really is a win, win. That is why I am so happy that along with partner organisations we are supporting this tree-planting project. Thank you to all the amazing volunteers and organisations who have worked tirelessly to bring this project to life.

Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment at Brent Council

Amount Invested

£6,500

was donated by Wates Living Space, who made the project possible through its wider social value commitment within Brent. The project team included the Resident Engagement Manager, Shauna Hutchinson, from Network Homes, who worked alongside Wates and Nichola Rogers to ensure the project was a success. In addition, there were several volunteers from both Network Homes and Wates present on 1 December 2022 to plant the 600 trees, led by the Conservation Volunteers who provided advice and support throughout the project.

Notting Hill Genesis Case Study: The Business Incubator

Project overview

Challenged with meeting the needs of, and tackling the challenges their diverse community face - particularly during the cost-of-living crisis - Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) created a Business Incubator for their community. Through their tailored approach and the flexibility of the programme, cultural sensitivity and ongoing support have been key elements in ensuring the programme's success.

The detail

- Located on the Concourse of Grahame Park, NHG's business incubator is designed to help new early-stage businesses and local entrepreneurs succeed by providing resources and support services. This includes:
 - Office Space: Free co-working spaces or dedicated desks
 - Mentorship: Access to experienced entrepreneurs and industry experts for guidance
 - Networking opportunities: Events, workshops, and seminars to connect with other entrepreneurs, potential partners, or investors
 - Funding opportunities: Support with exploring and applying for seed funding, grants and other forms of investments
 - Training and workshops: Classes or workshops on entrepreneurship, business strategies and industry-specific topics.
- The business incubator has been open for a year, in which time it has worked with over 18 new or existing businesses.



Case Studies

Diwis Creations – Victoria Olawoye is the founder and creative director of Diwis Creations, a social enterprise dedicated to improving mental health through creative activities such as digital skills, arts and crafts and empowerment workshops. Their mission is to empower people to explore their creativity and encourage them to express themselves in a safe environment. Victoria is deeply passionate about helping individuals to find peace and joy through creative expression. Using the business incubator at Grahame Park was an opportunity to collaborate with the community.

Victoria says “My experience at the Grahame Park Business Incubator at No. 20 has been truly exceptional. The staff has been incredibly supportive in terms of providing business assistance. The rooms are adequate and versatile, suitable for various purposes. The facility is clean, well-lit and secure, ensuring a comfortable working environment. Moreover, the feedback we have received from all participants in our workshops held there thus far has been overwhelmingly positive. The incubator is easily accessible and offers ample parking facilities as well.”



Notting Hill Genesis Case Study: The Business Incubator

KSprinkles – Elsinah Mensah is a mother to three girls with a passion for business, and in 2020 she launched her brand, KSprinkles, a colourful and fun clothing brand that specialises in custom-made clothing. Elsinah founded the company as a bedroom business with a mission to become the leading brand for birthday T-shirts for children. The company’s vision is to bring colour and joy into the lives of many by creating clothing that supports the children of single-parent families.

Elsinah says “Since launching KSprinkles in 2020 during lockdown, I have been dedicated to growing a strong brand that would in time become a big business. I had been working from home, juggling operations and design and everything else with motherhood and at times it would become overwhelming. Once I moved my business out of my home and into the business incubator, I was able to swiftly shift perspective and gears and now view the business in a more serious light. The business incubator manager has been such an immense help, guiding and advising me along the way and just to see other young business owners like me in the same space, it is so inspiring and motivating. I am forever grateful to YES charity for this invaluable opportunity to grow my business beyond my own scope and home.

4 Young Minds – 4 Young Minds is a social organisation founded in April 2021 by Denise Brown. The organisation provides interactive group workshops and one-to-one mentoring to young people aged 11-25 to empower them to take control of their wellbeing. The organisation aims to break down the stigma surrounding mental health and encourage young people to access the support they need. 4 Young Minds also works with teachers, parents, and carers to support them with getting the right tools to support young people’s wellbeing. They operate within schools and other youth-focused organisations.

Denise says “The incubator programme has been so helpful and came at the perfect time for my business. The Incubator team had been so attentive from the start and really took the time to understand not only my business, but me as a person to provide the best support. Since joining, I have been connected with funding sources that I was not even aware of and was successful for my first grant. Beyond the business support, the incubator team also encouraged personal development through vision boards and goal setting which has only enhanced my desire to continue working towards my business goals. I would recommend working with Youth Engagement Solutions (YES) to any aspiring social entrepreneurs!”

Sauro Active Paws – Sauro Liverani is 43 years old, lives in Barnet and has a passion for animals, especially dogs. He never thought he would be able to turn his passion into a career, but now he is self-employed dog walker. Sauro had some reservations about starting another business after his first business did not work out. He had been searching for years to get some support when he was introduced to the business incubator manager, who has supported him in officially registering as self-employed.

Sauro says “The incubator has provided me with an environment where I can access support to understand and develop my business through the information, advice, and guidance service. My business is steadily growing, and I am learning about scaling.”

Amount Invested

£50,000

Social Value

£588,869

(HACT Social Value Calculator)



Peabody Case Study: Advice Hub

Project overview

As the cost-of-living crisis has only added to already high economic deprivation, Peabody has seen many Thamesmead residents struggling and in need of financial and benefits advice. Through 'Life in Thamesmead,' an ethnographic study commissioned by Peabody and the Royal Borough of Greenwich, it was highlighted that there were low levels of awareness around accessing services. There was also mistrust of the council and authorities, and previous negative experiences of these organisations were a key barrier to families accessing local services. The study found that families with no recourse to public funds were less likely to access formal services for fear of being deported. Peabody aimed to tackle this head-on in their Great London Authority (GLA) funded Advice Hub, by providing a face-to-face service giving vital intensive support, including information, advice, and referral for issues of debt and finance, work and training, housing, and isolation.

The detail

- Peabody's hyper-local Advice Hub programme delivers an integrated, fast and seamless advice service which can be easily accessed by those in need in Thamesmead. Delivered in the Moorings, an area which experiences high levels of deprivation, schools lie at the heart of the offer, with the programme providing an integrated "front door" for local people to access help and support.
- By working with local partners in Thamesmead, through the Hub, Peabody delivers targeted interventions to help families or individuals on low or no incomes access advice and support. Additional services are commissioned in response to support needs identified, such as food insecurity, vulnerability, poor housing, and high levels of debt.
- The programme works in partnership with Live Well Greenwich partners and is a key part of a social prescribing infrastructure commissioned by the Council and local GPs. The model builds on Peabody's successful Positive Steps Thamesmead (PST) social prescribing programme, which was developed in response to a GP noting that 40% of people presenting were visiting because of non-medical factors. PST volunteers are based at different locations across Thamesmead (the majority at the GP practice). They take referrals from the GPs, have conversations with patients to determine their needs and refer clients to an appropriate advice agency.



Peabody Case Study: Advice Hub

- For the Advice Hub, local PST volunteers are based in schools and provide the first point of contact, undertaking a triage assessment. Volunteers are frequently those with lived experience, having faced challenges themselves, and are trained to interview clients and identify needs using a simple questionnaire which flags different services that may be helpful to the client. They will respond to requests for basic information using their local knowledge of services and will signpost to online and telephone support available through Live Well Greenwich partners.
- If the need is for specialist support, the volunteer will initiate an appointment or referral process based on an assessment of the nature and urgency of the need. In cases where the need is clear, or critical, volunteers will initiate a referral to relevant partners through Peabody's community development team. Appointments will be made for the client with the relevant agency, to be seen in Thamesmead within 10 days. Where the need is not urgent, or additional support is needed to identify specific support, volunteers will create an appointment with the Live Well Coach, who will meet with the client in the school for a discussion and will identify further support together.
- Additionally, through the programme, clients are able to access a wide range of other referral pathways, including food pantries and food banks, support around domestic violence, support with employment and training and a wide-ranging health and wellbeing offer.
- Peabody's work has identified that schools are integral to the success of this programme as they play a key role in identifying parents and families who have specific needs. Schools have built relationships with parents and have the knowledge of families who may have struggled to meet financial commitments, pay rent, have faced food insecurity and other challenges.



It provides an invaluable service to connect with those struggling in our community, understand their needs and quickly (or immediately when needed) connect them to different services that are proving to deliver effective and immediate relief.

**Dr. Prem Anand,
Lakeside Medical Centre**

Southern Housing Case Study: Increase Programme

(Residents' enterprise training and small business support)

Project overview

As the cost-of-living crisis makes financial challenges even more apparent for residents, Southern Housing wanted to provide support through business and skills training. Through their resident enterprise programme, the association is supporting residents to create their own job opportunities and boost their confidence and incomes.



The detail

- The Increase Programme is an award-winning residents' enterprise training programme which has explored alternative routes to the labour market for residents.
- Through the multi-agency partnership, residents have been empowered to develop their own skills and turn these into career pathways.
- The programme reacted to cost-of-living challenges by developing new content designed to share experience in supporting 'green' jobs, youth employment support and overcoming language barriers.
- Ambassadors have created networks with programme participants in local communities.
- In total, over 9,500 residents were supported through the Increase Programme in 38 disadvantaged locations, with a network of over 260 local resident ambassadors; 4,923 residents completed training courses and business start-up training, achieving 1,109 business starts and 1,723 jobs and training outcomes.

Testimony

Becki – Becki from Sittingbourne started the Song Signing choir after joining Southern training. She teaches sign language through the power of music. Music was therapy for Becki during a time of depression. The enterprise course helped her get started with her award-winning song-signing choir that has performed for royalty.

Sonya – Sonya from Maidstone runs Sonya's Healthy Kitchen. She offers food products and workshops for diabetics, including a chocolate bar. She takes inspiration from nature's colours, tastes, and textures when creating her products. The course helped her get started with her business idea.

Becki, Sonya and more than 1,000 people gained valuable information for their business start-ups thanks to the association's enterprise course and follow-up support. Participants were able to turn their ideas into successful businesses, from soap-making ventures and recycled waste jewellery creations, to dog training schools and photography businesses. The Increase Programme has helped a wide range of business ventures flourish.

Amount Invested

The multi-agency partnership saw Southern invest

£128,000

Social Value

350

Southern Housing residents on training every 12 months with 250 training, jobs and enterprise outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Sahil Khan

Director of Community Strategy,
Partnerships and Funding, Peabody

This report shines a light on how we, as community anchors, are making a positive difference to the lives of thousands of people. The case studies showcase the breadth of community investment services that we provide. We are not afraid to tackle some of society's most complex and entrenched challenges; from food insecurity and tackling poverty to improving mental and physical health; helping people into jobs and training to providing targeted advice support.

Common to all is the power of partnership. We work side by side with our communities putting their needs at the heart of all that we do, with many projects and initiatives designed and delivered in collaboration with residents and community and voluntary sector partners. We work with our residents and our communities, unlocking opportunities, co-creating and tailoring services and delivering the programmes and activities our communities want and need.

Across the G15 we are committed to increasing our impact and continuing to provide local joined-up support. Together we are making a real difference.



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.





g15.london

 @G15London  The G15

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