



# ANNUAL REPORT

2017/18



NORTH LONDON CARES



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Delivery figures in this report cover the period January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2018. Financial figures cover our accounting year from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 to August 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, as submitted in our annual accounts.

# A MESSAGE FROM HARRY

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When I first retired, I made the decision not to spend all my time in the pub but I soon found I wasn't leaving the house or seeing people. I started going to my local community centre and that's where I was first introduced to North London Cares, seven years ago. The clubs felt different. Everyone was laughing, having fun. The young people were so friendly. I used to moan about young people but it made me change my mind. Everyone was so nice.

Over the years I've done so much with North London Cares. I've been to the London Symphony Orchestra, learnt photography, street dancing – we even went for cocktails in Soho! Every month I attend the podcasting club and the stories people share are always surprising. It's nice talking to young people not just about how things used to be, but how things are now. It gives you energy, makes you active and keeps your brain alert.

I've been on lots of trips to local businesses to learn what they do. When I was at work women were only given admin roles but going into modern workplaces it's inspiring to see so many women in important roles. It's opened my eyes to how much we wasted the talents and skills of women over the years.

I have two Love Your Neighbour matches – Emma and Ollie. Emma took me to the theatre for my birthday one year and to an escape room another! We went to Sadler's Wells because she knows I like dance and we meet regularly for lunch. Ollie and I went to the Postal Museum with his son last week – I used to work for the Post Office so I had lots to share. I've met their friends too and it's widened my circle. I love spending time in their company and because of them I feel more connected.

Years ago I said hello to an old man as I was passing and he thanked me because he said he felt invisible. I don't feel that way. Thanks to the confidence I've got from being part of North London Cares I talk to more people than ever before. I've learnt to be more friendly and outgoing. I used to sit at the back but now I'm always at the front.

HARRY



# A MESSAGE FROM EMMA

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I've been part of North London Cares for five years and in that time I've made some of my best friends. Harry was one of the first people I met. Over time we got to know each other well and he's now my Love Your Neighbour match so we have lots of adventures. We talk about everything and are in touch in some form every few days and that contact always leaves me with a smile on my face. Harry and I have had fun going to see dance and theatre shows, watched our football teams play on the telly and my family and friends all love Harry as much as I do. Our friendship has helped improve my confidence too. I wish everyone could have a friend like Harry.

The highlight of my month is the podcast club which I've been a regular at for a couple of years. I still remember my first club. I was introduced to Ray, Sonia and Tony and that moment changed my life. We had such a laugh and I quickly learned that Ray was a great storyteller, Sonia had a wicked sense of humour and I loved Tony's Irish accent which reminded me of my nan who died over 20 years ago. He even knew the small village she was from.

Each month we get to hear some fascinating stories about our local area and the amazing achievements of our friends. It's clear that despite decades of age difference we are so similar, whether that be in interests, sense of humour or locations. I encourage everyone I meet to join North London Cares and I explain it's a catch up with friends old and new and is life enhancing. I have personally seen first-hand how it improves wellbeing and confidence for both generations. Being part of something is important for us all.

Now I help to run the club on behalf of the charity, alongside Harry, Fran, Ray, Anne, Frances and some of our other neighbours – it's a collaboration between the generations. We have now been running the club for six months and it is getting harder to get everyone to leave at the end! We're not just a social club, we've become a family.

EMMA



# OUR VISION

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North London Cares is a **community network** of young professionals and older neighbours hanging out and helping one another in our **rapidly changing city**.

We do this because while our capital is amazing – full of cultural and economic opportunities and with history, influence and innovation at its heart – it can also feel **anonymous, isolating and lonely**.

This is especially the case for **older people** whose social networks may have frayed and whose communities are transforming faster than ever before due to globalisation, gentrification, digitisation, transience and housing bubbles; and for **young professionals** facing work and social media pressures and often living far from friends and family.

Increasingly, as our city transforms, those two groups are living in **parallel worlds**. And that separation wastes human potential, entrenches loneliness and isolation, perpetuates social division, and is ultimately corrosive for our city and our society.

North London Cares is not fatalistic about this dual challenge. Our vision is to bring older and younger people together to share time, laughter, new experiences and friendship – so that **everyone can feel part of our changing city, rather than left behind by it**.

Our target outcomes are to:

- ◉ Reduce loneliness and isolation amongst older and younger north Londoners alike;
- ◉ Improve neighbours' wellbeing, confidence, skills, belonging, purpose and power;
- ◉ Bring people together to bridge the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides.



# OUR MODEL

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North London Cares seeks to **address our modern blight of 'disconnection in a connected age'** by harnessing the changing people and places around us for the benefit of neighbours, communities and our city as a whole. We do this through four core programmes.

Our **Social Clubs** are group activities, occurring five or six times a week, which offer an anchor of shared time and new experiences in familiar but often changing locations including pubs, cafes, local businesses and north London's world famous cultural institutions. Sessions include dances, 'Desert Island Discs' nights, 'back to work' business visits, quizzes, themed parties and more.

Meanwhile, our **Love Your Neighbour** programme brings young professionals together with their often housebound older neighbours to build and support special one-to-one friendships and to bring some of the outside world in for people who may struggle to get out. Friends share a couple of hours of conversation and companionship every week, and are given a £40 budget to spend on games, takeaways, films or other experiences to share together.

Third, our proactive **Outreach** harnesses the city's culture and communities to identify older and younger people who'd like to participate. We go to where people are – in local chemists, supermarkets, libraries, GP surgeries, sheltered housing units and other locations – to strike up conversations and invite people to our activities. Our Winter Wellbeing project, for example, helps older people stay warm, active and connected during the most isolating time of year.

Finally, our **Community Fundraising** offers a fourth way for younger and older Londoners to share new experiences. Events, challenges, corporate partnerships and online campaigns all offer the chance for neighbours to share fresh camaraderie while raising money to keep everything in their network free.

Through each of these integrated programmes the **relationships created are two-way**: older people benefit from feeling part of their changing city and by sharing the stories, laughs and experiences that mean so much to them with younger people, while young professionals connect to the heritage of this global city through the friendship, connection and community of their older neighbours.



# WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

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London is one of the most amazing places in the world: its businesses, its culture, and its diversity all make this one of the most exciting places to live, work and play. But as new office and apartment blocks go up in front of our eyes and whole swathes of Camden and Islington are transformed by gentrification, transience, digitisation and other factors we can all sometimes feel left behind by the pace of change.

In that context, loneliness, and broader disconnection – from our communities as they change, from businesses, from one another and from ourselves – is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Nine million adults in the UK say they often feel lonely. Two in five people over the age of 65 say the TV is their main form of company. 17% of older people haven't spoken to a friend or relative in a week and 11% haven't had meaningful human contact in a month. And one in 10 GP appointments is taken by an older person with no other condition than that they're lonely.

But loneliness is not just a later life problem. On the contrary: studies show that young people are at least the second loneliest age group and recent research has shown that they may even be the loneliest. Pressures at work, social media expectations, screen weariness, and "FOMO" (fear of missing out) can leave young professionals arriving in London overwhelmed and lacking meaningful connection.

This is not just heartbreaking; it's also a national public health crisis – because loneliness kills. It brings on heart attacks, strokes, depression and dementia. While obesity increases our chance of premature death by up to 20%, and dependency on alcohol by 30%, not having meaningful relationships in our everyday lives increases our chance of early death by a sobering 45%. It is shown that people who suffer heart attacks drastically increase their chance of survival based on two key factors: not smoking, and having good relationships that mean something to them.

At a time when our communities are transforming and showing signs of division, and our health and care services are under severe pressure, this epidemic comes at a huge financial as well as personal cost. In fact, our disconnection from one another could be costing the economy £32 billion a year. On the other hand, neighbourliness – connection to one another – delivers £24 billion in value to communities all across the country.

North London Cares' goal is to help older and younger people alike to feel part of our changing city, to build the types of relationships – forged in shared new experiences – that really mean something, and to help people to connect to the past, present and future of our city through interactions with the people who make it great.



# 2018 IN NUMBERS

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North London Cares has now been running for seven and a half years. In that time, we have built up a network of **3,000 older people and 3,800 young professionals** who have shared time, laughter and new experiences across the generations in so many ways. In 2018:

- ◉ **270 social clubs were hosted**, attended 5,719 times by older and younger people;
- ◉ **128 older and younger people** were part of the Love Your Neighbour programme, enjoying conversation and companionship every week;
- ◉ **222 older people were connected** to local activities and services through our seventh Winter Wellbeing project;

Over seven and a half years older and younger people have now **shared a total of 173,600 interactions and 31,100 hours** across rapidly changing Camden and Islington.

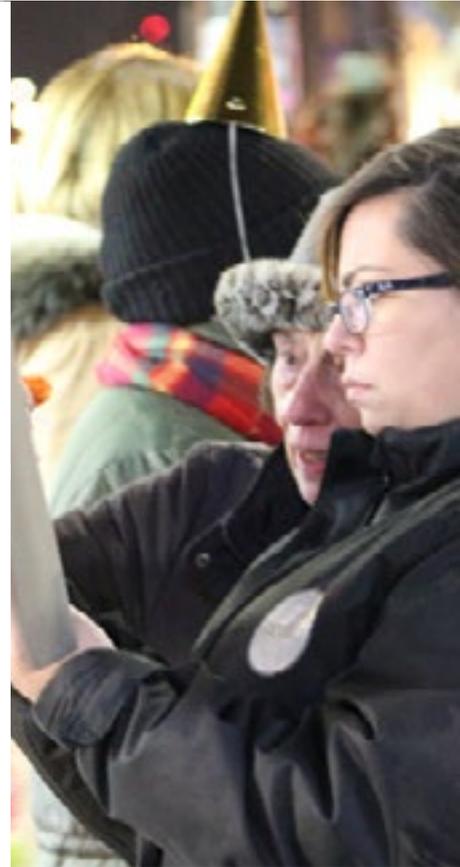


# SOCIAL CLUBS

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North London Cares' social clubs are group activities bringing older and younger neighbours together to share friendship through the type of exciting experiences that make north London unique.

Clubs include dance parties, yoga, podcasting, photography, choirs, new tech workshops, quizzes, pub clubs and many more.





# LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

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In a city moving and changing at speed, North London Cares' one-to-one friendship programme helps different generations of Londoners to find a little pause, reflection, conversation and friendship. Friends talk about everything and nothing – from work, to weddings, to days gone by. And in sharing their stories and getting out and about, everyone feels a little more connected.



# OUTREACH

Our proactive outreach – identifying older and younger neighbours and inviting them to be part of the North London Cares community – is one of the things that makes our model unique.

Every day, we speak to older people where they are – on doorsteps, in pharmacies, in GP surgeries, in sheltered housing units, on estates, in supermarkets and even at bus stops, from Kentish Town to Kilburn, Holloway to Holborn. We receive referrals, from partners at Camden and Islington Councils and across the proud voluntary and community sector, of older Londoners who might enjoy sharing time with their younger neighbours.

And we harness social, digital and employment networks to inspire young people to get involved – with positive online story sharing, monthly volunteer inductions, fundraising activities and socials.

Every year, North London Cares runs an intensive Winter Wellbeing project, to help people stay warm, active and connected during the most isolating time of year. Through this work in winter 2017/18, we:

- Held 731 conversations with older neighbours about how to stay warm and connected;
- Gave out 94 blankets and items of warm clothing, and distributed grants totalling £2,500 to 29 people really feeling the cold;
- Made 222 individual referrals or interventions for people – from housing advice to support with benefits.





# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

Community Fundraising is more than just a way to raise money. It's another way for older and younger neighbours to lead North London Cares, to share time and friendship, and to show that when people work together they share power and a sense of belonging.

So we're proud that 40% of North London Cares' budget is funded from within the network – through corporate partnerships, individual

donations, online campaigns, and scores of north Londoners taking on runs, cycles, walks and other challenges to help fund the network they love.

In 2018, North London Cares:

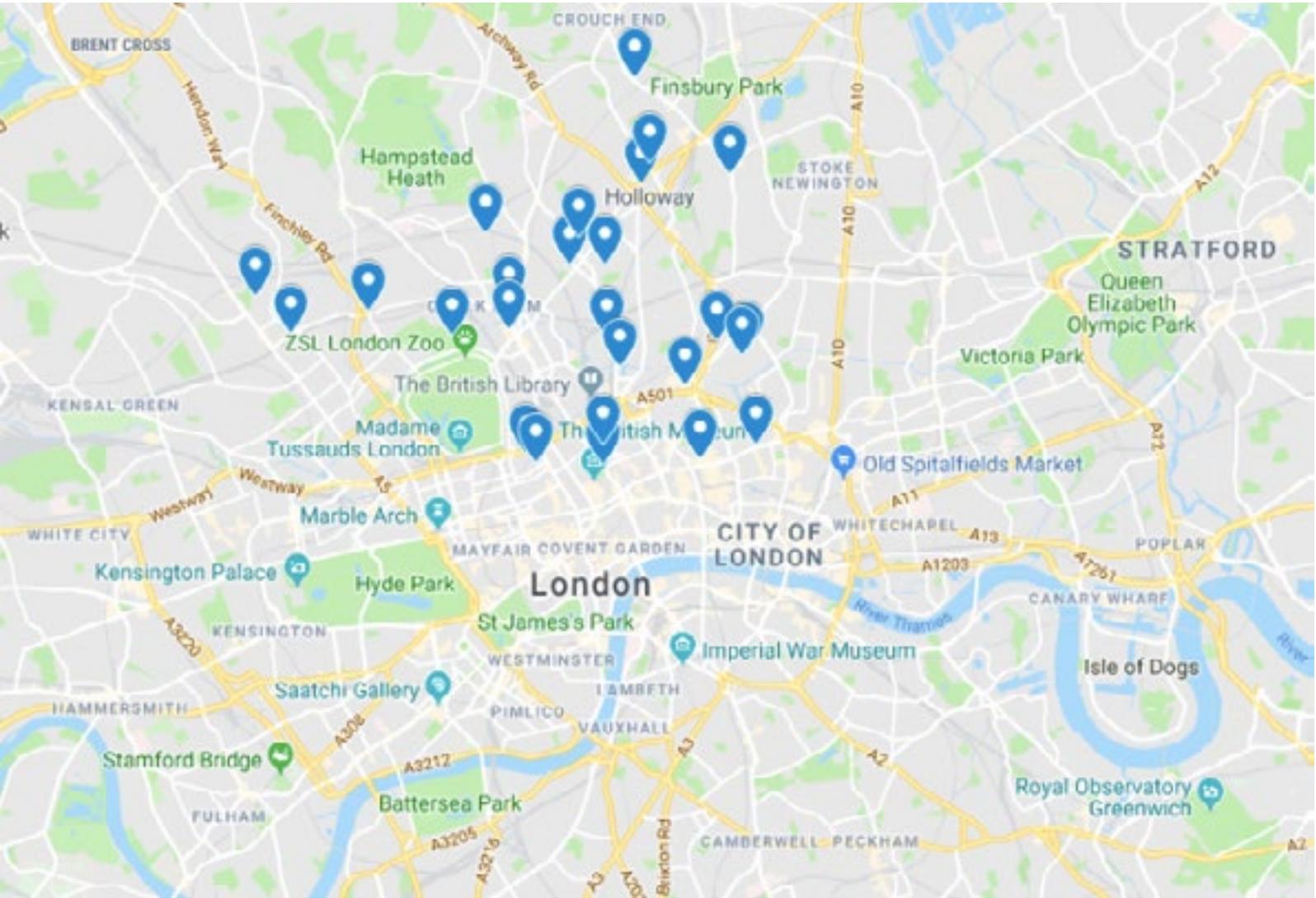
- Inspired 62 challenge fundraisers to complete various races – raising £25,456;
- Worked with corporations to raise an additional £13,817;
- Hosted several events including 'Hilarity for Charity' with Stewart Lee, pub quizzes and a gala at Oxo Tower.
- Completed The Big Give Christmas Challenge, raising £8,840 from 120 donors.



# WHERE WE WORK

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North London Cares works across the boroughs of Camden and Islington, in neighbourhoods including Kentish Town, Kilburn, Camden Town, Holloway, Highbury, Angel, Queen's Crescent, King's Cross, Archway and Bloomsbury.



# WHO WE WORK WITH

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We're so grateful for all the wonderful local partners who have helped make North London Cares' vision and activities a reality – organisations from business, government and the local voluntary sector who have let us use their space, invited older and younger neighbours to join the network, and offered a home for North London Cares to put down roots. They include:

Abbey Community Association, Ageing Better in Camden, Age UK Camden, Age UK Islington, Camden Collective, Camden Council, Castlehaven Community Association, Fitzrovia Youth in Action, Hilldrop Community Association, Holloway Neighbourhood Group, Islington Council, Kentish Town Community Association, London Symphony Orchestra, Marchmont Community Association, The Peel Institute and others.



# OUR IMPACT

Two major evaluations have shown that North London Cares works in reducing isolation and helping older and younger people alike to feel better connected to the changing community around them. Of older neighbours involved:

- A majority report feeling closer to the community;
- A majority report 'missing other people less';
- Almost a quarter do not attend any other social activities apart from those put on by The Cares Family.



**73%**  
say their  
isolation is  
reduced



**81%**  
say they  
feel better  
connected to  
other people



**77%**  
say their  
relationships  
with young  
people have  
improved



**86%**  
say they are  
better able  
to appreciate  
the world

Crucially, the young professionals who are part of the network benefit too:

- 98% say they have a greater connection to the community;
- 98% say they've been able to contribute in a way they otherwise would not;
- 97% say that they are more able to appreciate older people.

The model works because it is designed to appeal to the people most at risk of loneliness – not just older and younger people generally, but specifically people who live alone (67% of older neighbours in our studies live alone); the 'oldest old' (52% of older neighbours are over 80); people in social housing (59% of older neighbours are social tenants); and transient young professionals (60% of the young people involved live in private rented accommodation, nearly 40% in 'flat shares'; 53% work full time in the private sector).



# STORIES

“ North London Stories is a regular fixture in my diary. I plan any other appointments around it so I don't ever miss it, look forward to it all month, and am already excited for next time as I leave the club. The older and younger people who come together once a month are an amazing bunch, who genuinely enjoy each other's company and spending time together.

FRAN, 35



“ North London Cares makes me feel closer to the community I live in. I moved to London from Slovenia a year and a half ago to study, so I didn't come with any roots attached to the north London soil. I also commute most days to central London and come back in the evenings, and there are very few things I do in Kentish Town apart from weekly groceries! Being part of North London Cares makes me feel like I have a place in the community. The events allow me to meet my neighbours – it's really nice when you recognise someone at the bus stop and they ask you how your week has been!

LUCJA, 26

“ It's a really nice break from the rest of the week. I really consider Shirley a mate. We talk about everything and nothing. I like learning from her. I like the fact we're different. I tell her about the festivals I go to and my dating life.

KIRSTY, 31



“ It's the mix of younger and the older people that makes it special – and you feel great when you walk into the room, with so many friendly faces. Everyone has a different story to tell, and the younger people are great – I look forward to hearing about them, and they enjoy listening to my stories.

RAY, 72



# STORIES

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“ I look forward to going along to the social clubs – it’s now part of my routine. I’ve met many people I wouldn’t have, from different backgrounds and those who have different interests. The young people help me to understand what life is like today. It’s really interesting to hear about their jobs and what they do in their spare time. I used to teach vocational subjects so I’m always interested to hear what they get up to. The types of jobs people have now are very different – we went to PwC for a workplace visit and I couldn’t believe the 3D printer. Stuff like that didn’t exist in my day. As I’m a carer, I would be isolated if I didn’t have North London Cares. From going along, I feel good now. You can sit and listen, or you can talk. There’s a place for everyone. ”

PETER, 75



“ Mike and I hit our regular in Camden, sunk a few jars, caught up and put the world to rights. It’s always a bitter shandy for Mike and IPA for me, and because of Mike’s years as a drummer we call him the rocker and me the punk. ”

DEXTER, 30

“ I was drawn to North London Cares after having to work from home and finding being on my own all day was no fun and very lonely. It made me think of my grandparents who would have lived like this for a very long time. Being part of North London Cares is so important to me as I know that older people are not being forgotten. ”

MICA, 29



# OUR FINANCES

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources	437,844	369,012	334,525	190,485
Grants	51%	43%	52%	62%
Donations	40%	50%	31%	23%
Commissions	2%	3%	12%	15%
Restricted income	54%	49%	80%	77%
Unrestricted income	46%	51%	20%	23%
Resources expended	425,797	337,173	306,274	179,606
Direct charitable expenditure	69%	76%	86%	93%
Management, fundraising, etc.	31%	24%	14%	7%
Net incoming resources	12,047	31,839	28,251	10,879
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>				
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	4,663	5,096	1,376	1,321
Current assets				
Debtors	4,320	5,321	1,300	-
Cash at hand	163,195	130,979	122,955	80,191
Total	167,515	136,300	124,255	80,191
Creditors	(24,425)	(5,690)	(21,764)	(5,896)
Net current assets	143,090	130,610	102,491	75,616
Total funds	147,753	135,706	103,867	75,616

# OUR FINANCES

## DETAILED STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	291,840	217,343	181,050	111,586
Other staff costs	1,434	8,338	-	-
Costs of raising funds	19,137	24,212	13,473	3,066
Costs of charitable activities	18,565	20,849	61,553	38,501
Rent and office running costs	24,403	19,507	10,920	7,657
Insurance	1,800	1,749	1,156	1,053
Advertising and marketing	1,888	2,009	1,086	3,406
Printing, postage and stationery	9,364	9,226	6,640	-
Staff development	4,893	4,664	3,273	-
Travel and subsistence	14,256	18,830	10,077	-
Website	-	2,156	684	4,884
Evaluation and consultancy	26,033	-	7,195	6,620
Accountancy costs	4,443	2,274	2,550	1,330
Independent examination costs	900	900	750	700
Subscriptions	1,237	1,376	1,972	-
Telephone and internet	3,967	2,130	2,388	-
Depreciation	1,637	1,610	1,028	803

All figures are taken from North London Cares' annual accounts 2017/18, submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.

# OUR SUPPORTERS

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The Field Family Charitable Trust

theBigGive

Charles F French Charitable Trust



Ajahma Charitable Trust



We'd like to thank David McDonough OBE, our first Patron, for his support, advice and kindness over the past year. We also receive generous donations and wider guidance from a number of individuals who wish to remain anonymous. Their humility is matched by our gratitude for how they help support and sustain relationships through North London Cares.



# OUR INFLUENCE



In the last year North London Cares has begun to have a significant impact on national policy-making as well as local community togetherness.

We contributed many insights to the Jo Cox Loneliness Commission and have worked closely with government on the development of their loneliness strategy which was launched in 2018 with a visit from the Prime Minister to a joint North London Cares and South London Cares social club.

We have given evidence to three All Party Parliamentary Groups – on loneliness, social integration and intergenerational fairness, as well as to the International Longevity Centre and The King's Fund. Our work has featured in various media throughout the year.

And in 2018 our Founder and CEO, Alex Smith, was appointed to be one of the first 20 Obama Foundation Fellows, selected from 21,000 applicants in 191 countries around the world, recognising the importance of our work on loneliness and isolation as gateways into other societal issues.

We've also supported many other organisations to deepen their own impact. Excitingly, we've supported a former North London Cares volunteer to build a similar organisation, B:Friend, reducing loneliness in his hometown of Doncaster, and mentored The Chatty Cafés scheme which is now working with Costa and Sainsbury's to tackle loneliness in retail outlets across the UK.

The  
Economist



THE TIMES

BBC  
WORLD  
SERVICE

# OUR TEAM

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## LAURA DE SOUZA

HEAD OF PROGRAMMES

Laura is Head of Programmes at North London Cares. Laura previously worked at a nursing home for disabled servicemen, and before that in TV production.

## ANDY NAYLOR

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (SOCIAL CLUBS)

Andy designs and delivers exciting social clubs across Camden and Islington. Andy previously worked for Age UK Islington.

## KIRSTY SHANKS

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (SOCIAL CLUBS)

Kirsty designs and delivers social clubs across Camden and Islington to get younger and older north Londoners enjoying time together.

## HARRY JENKINS

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR)

Harry looks after Love Your Neighbour in Islington, facilitating one-to-one friendships between younger and older neighbours. He previously worked on student action projects.

## FRANCESCA LEWIS

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR)

Francesca looks after Love Your Neighbour in Camden, facilitating one-to-one friendships between younger and older neighbours. She previously worked in mental health for the NHS.

## ROXANNE RUSTEM

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEERS)

Roxanne manages our growing volunteer network and leads on reaching older north Londoners. In 2019 Roxanne will be on maternity leave.

## JULIET MCNELLY

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEERS) – MATERNITY COVER

Juliet will lead on Volunteer and Outreach Coordination while Roxanne is away. She previously worked on two Winter Wellbeing projects at North London Cares.

## VICTORIA BUCKLE

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Victoria supports our individual donors, coordinates fundraising events and cheers on North London Cares' challenge fundraisers. She previously worked at Citizens Advice.

North London Cares is supported by additional colleagues from The Cares Family, who also work across our sibling charities in south London, Manchester and Liverpool. **Emily Quilter** is Director of Development, leading national fundraising, supported by our Head of Development **Catrin Thomas** and Partnerships Coordinator **Charlie Jamieson**. **Alex Smith** is Founder and Chief Executive.



# OUR TRUSTEES

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## **JOSIE CLUER**

CHAIR

Josie is a Director at EY, focusing on local public services. She was formerly an adviser to the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, a Special Adviser in Gordon Brown's government, and a trustee of Alcohol Concern.

## **BEN WILSON**

TREASURER

Ben works in the Office of the Chairman at Liberty House Group. His financial career has focussed on banking and industry, including for Nomura International, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Noble Group. He is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and holds an MBA.

## **DAVID EASTON**

SECRETARY

David is an Investment Manager at CDC Group, responsible for investments in Africa and South East Asia. David was previously at Bridges Ventures and before that worked for the Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative and McKinsey & Company.

## **VIX ANDERTON**

TRUSTEE

Vix works to improve the lives of women and girls. She is passionate about mental health and wellbeing, diversity and inclusion. A former Royal Air Force Officer, she spent three years working in the international development sector on projects all over the world before moving into a portfolio career.

## **POLLY BALSOM**

TRUSTEE

Polly is Head of Communications and Marketing at Royal Trinity Hospice where she leads on messaging and campaign delivery. She previously worked at Missing People where she was responsible for communications and partnership campaigns, and has helped to establish HIV support charity Body & Soul's social enterprise 'Brave'.

## **DAVID HAYMAN**

TRUSTEE

David is Special Adviser to the Executive Director at the ONE Campaign. He formerly worked on strategy for education charity Ark, at Educate Girls and at The Prince's Trust, having started his career at Accenture. David helped set up national educational charity Future First.

## **JAMES LEE**

TRUSTEE

James has had a long career in local government, where his responsibilities include safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation.

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

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Eight years ago, I was a typical young person in London. Day after day, I would wake up, rush to work where I would sit in front of a computer and share occasional small talk with colleagues who were much like me – ambitious to get on, busy in their personal lives, happy but possibly lacking something more meaningful.

I decided to run for my local council seat in north London, and on election day, 2010, my life changed. It changed because, doing my rounds on that sunny day, trying to get people to come out and vote, I met an 84-year-old man named Fred in Holloway.

Fred told me he'd love to come out and vote. He'd never missed an election in his life. But he wouldn't be able to make this one because he hadn't been out of his house for three months. In that time, he hadn't seen or spoken to anyone apart from his carer. So he wasn't up to it.

There was a wheelchair behind Fred and I asked him if he'd feel comfortable if I wheeled him to the voting place. He was happy to. While we were out, Fred waved to neighbours. He smiled. He became animated, almost giddy, as he connected with the people and places around him.

But what Fred really wanted was a haircut and so, the next day, I returned again, having lost my election, to wheel Fred down the road to the local barber's. While he sat in that chair and told his story, I learned that Fred and I had so much in common. We'd both lived in the neighbourhood for 30 years. We both loved Sinatra. And Fred had set up and run the shop that was my favourite place growing up as a kid – a local fancy dress shop.

Eight years on, we're thrilled that this one interaction that spurred a friendship has now inspired so many more. And in our fast moving world, where loneliness is increasingly understood to be harmful for individuals, communities and society at large, we're inspired again that people being with people, sharing their stories, can help us to meet that challenge.

North London Cares is designed to reduce loneliness and help older and younger people feel better connected to one another and to the city we love. We know that our model works because it is targeted to appeal to people who can benefit from those connections the most: generations who have so much to gain from one another in shared time, laughter, new experiences and friendship – especially as our urban landscape transforms.

**ALEX SMITH**  
FOUNDER AND CEO, NORTH LONDON CARES

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

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It's been an exciting year for North London Cares. As well as all the wonderful impact of bringing older and younger people together across our north London communities, demonstrated in the photos and stories in this report, we've also started to have a real, lasting impact at the national systemic level too.

Specifically, in October 2018, the Prime Minister launched the world's first ever loneliness strategy, which we helped to shape, at a joint North London Cares and South London Cares event. She acknowledged that loneliness is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time – “a reality for too many people in our society, it can affect anyone of any age and background.”

The beginnings of that systemic change are so important because they can lead to a wider culture shift too. Because we know that while we live in a society which – with its self-service checkouts and card readers – can prioritise what's efficient over what's important, we all need to re-raise what makes us human in the first place if we're to tackle this loneliness crisis: our empathy.

As we look to the future, North London Cares is focused on driving that systems and culture change through meaningful, local, lasting relationships across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides. To do that, we are making strides towards a sustainable future – with new partnerships, new staff, new evaluation studies, and new investments in the systems and processes to keep North London Cares making a real difference in people's lives for the long term.

To keep up that local impact and national influence, in 2019 we'll be working even more closely with local community groups, sheltered housing units, faith groups and businesses – as well as government, the media and national partners – to make sure that as many older and younger people as possible can feel part of their shifting world, rather than left behind by it.

So we need your help. Please support North London Cares in whatever way you can – by joining a social club, by connecting us to your employer, by completing a marathon, and by sharing time and laughter with your neighbours. Together, we can help make our communities feel closer, even at a time of rapid change.

**JOSIE CLUER**  
CHAIR, NORTH LONDON CARES



NORTH LONDON CARES

[www.northlondoncares.org.uk](http://www.northlondoncares.org.uk)