



# Annual Report

2018/19



NORTH LONDON CARES

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Delivery figures in this report cover the period January 1st 2019 to December 31st 2019. Financial figures cover our accounting year from September 1st 2018 to August 31st 2019, as submitted in our annual accounts.

# 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**. 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, connection, 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 and invite 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 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, culture and 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.

9 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 ten 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 some research shows that they may even be the loneliest. Pressures at work, social media, screen weariness, and "FOMO" (fear of missing out) can leave young people arriving in London overwhelmed and lacking meaningful connection.

This is not just personally 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 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.



# 2018/19

## IN NUMBERS

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North London Cares has now been running for eight and a half years. In that time, we have built up a network of 4,600 young people and 3,500 older neighbours who have shared time, laughter and new experiences across the generations in so many ways. In 2018/19 our results included:

Over eight and a half years older and younger people have now **shared a total of 200,645 interactions and 36,466 hours** across rapidly changing Camden and Islington.

- **275 social clubs were hosted**, attended 5,190 times by older and younger people;
- **204 older and younger people** were part of the Love Your Neighbour programme, enjoying conversation and companionship every week.
- **339 older people were connected** to local activities and services through our seventh Winter Wellbeing project.



# 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.

This year they've included dance parties, yoga, new tech workshops, singalongs, book clubs, pub nights, creative writing, talent shows, 'back to work' business visits and more.

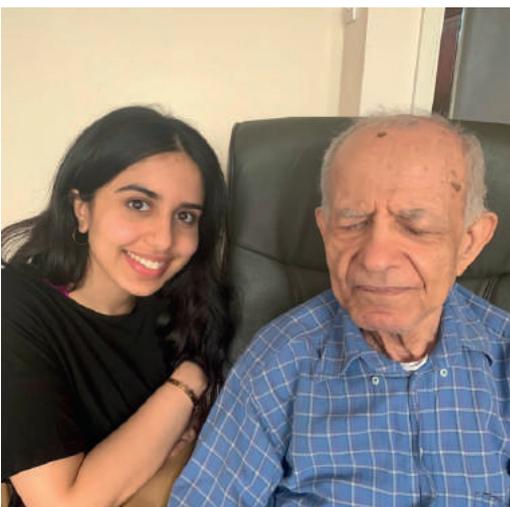




# LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

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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 connection. Friends talk about everything and nothing – from work, to weddings, to days gone by. And in sharing their stories, 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 are out speaking 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 2018/19, we:

- Held 1,000 conversations with older neighbours about how to stay warm and connected;
- Knocked on 498 doors to identify people most in need of connection;
- Gave out 334 blankets and items of warm clothing, and distributed grants totalling £2,500 to 33 people really feeling the cold;
- Made 606 individual referrals or interventions for people – from housing advice to support with benefits to connections to our own activities.





# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

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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 this year £135,000 of North London Cares' income was raised from within the network – through individual donations, corporate partnerships, online campaigns, and scores of north Londoners taking on runs, cycles and other challenges to help fund the network they love.



# WHO WE WORK WITH

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We're so grateful for all the wonderful local partners who help 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.





# QUOTES ABOUT NORTH LONDON CARES

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“ The art of conversation is not a thing from the past. It’s a thing to be used. That’s one thing I like about coming here: you can be open, you can talk to anyone. ”



“ What other organisation gives an older person like me the chance to converse and interact with people much younger than me? ”

“ I’ve met so many people – it’s like a family gathering where everybody respects each other. ”



“ North London Cares really changed my opinion of younger people. Honestly, I didn’t think younger people would really want to be involved with us, and you know, talk to us. ”



“ From that moment, right through until now the friendship has grown and grown and grown. It's so beautiful. ”

“ We were like two kids first time we met. She's a lovely outgoing girl and she would do anything for me. ”



“ I think it's wonderful. It completely changed my view of youngsters. ”



“ We laugh a lot. It's nice hearing younger people's views compared with an older person. As I say, 99% I'm talking to people more or less my age. Talking to somebody younger feels wonderful. ”



“ Definitely mentally and emotionally I feel better that there are humans out there thinking about me. ”





“ Sometimes I look round the room and am astounded by all the smiling faces, laughter and conversation. I don't know any other organisation that brings so many people from so many walks of life together. ”

“ I think the social clubs are really special. They provide an opportunity to bond with members of your community who you would never normally meet. I love hearing about other people's stories, particularly as they are so different to my own. ”



“ I love it as it puts life into perspective. My job means that I am very busy and things at work seem stressful but going to social clubs gives me a reason to take my mind of it and talk to people I wouldn't normally talk to. ”

“ I think people forget but that's the problem with society, that sometimes people see older people as just older people – forgetting that they've had amazing lives, they've done amazing things and still do. ”



“ I struggle to switch off in the big city but the social clubs have allowed me to unwind and find friendships with strangers which is invaluable. It has had a totally positive effect on my life, it is one of the best things I have done since moving to London over three and a half years ago. ”



“ I think loneliness is a huge problem in London, for the elderly and also for young people. I’ve lived in the city for four years now and still feel that it’s incredibly hard to meet people. I don’t really class myself as a volunteer at North London Cares because the older neighbours help me as much as I help them. ”

“ Too often in this digital, individual world people remain ignored. It’s lovely to engage with my neighbours, swap memories and learn new things. For the first time in a long time I felt a sense of value and belonging. ”



“ I love it. I feel part of a community. I have people I see regularly, and I know will be there, who know who I am. ”

“ It makes me feel less alone, and more engaged, it is also nice not to be stuck on social media for an evening. ”



# OUR FINANCES

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

|                           | <b>18/19</b>   | <b>17/18</b>   | <b>16/17</b>   | <b>15/16</b>   | <b>14/15</b>   |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       |
| <b>Incoming resources</b> | <b>481,155</b> | <b>437,844</b> | <b>369,012</b> | <b>334,525</b> | <b>190,485</b> |
| Grants                    | 69%            | 51%            | 43%            | 52%            | 62%            |
| Donations                 | 28%            | 40%            | 50%            | 31%            | 19%            |
| Commissions               | 2%             | 2%             | 3%             | 12%            | 15%            |
| Restricted income         | 72%            | 54%            | 49%            | 80%            | 77%            |
| Unrestricted income       | 28%            | 46%            | 51%            | 20%            | 23%            |
| <b>Resources expended</b> | <b>480,614</b> | <b>425,797</b> | <b>337,173</b> | <b>306,274</b> | <b>179,606</b> |
| Charitable expenditure    | 78%            | 69%            | 76%            | 86%            | 93%            |
| Management & fundraising  | 22%            | 31%            | 24%            | 14%            | 8%             |
| <b>Net resources</b>      | <b>541</b>     | <b>12,047</b>  | <b>31,839</b>  | <b>28,251</b>  | <b>10,879</b>  |

## BALANCE SHEET

|                       |                |                |                |                |               |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Fixed assets</b>   |                |                |                |                |               |
| Tangible assets       | 4,078          | 4,663          | 5,096          | 1,376          | 1,321         |
| <b>Current assets</b> |                |                |                |                |               |
| Debtors               | 7,962          | 4,320          | 5,321          | 1,300          | -             |
| Cash at hand          | 146,448        | 163,195        | 130,979        | 122,955        | 80,191        |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>154,410</b> | <b>167,515</b> | <b>136,300</b> | <b>124,255</b> | <b>80,191</b> |
| Creditors             | (10,194)       | (24,425)       | (5,690)        | (21,764)       | (5,896)       |
| Net current assets    | 144,216        | 143,090        | 130,610        | 102,491        | 75,616        |
| <b>Total funds</b>    | <b>148,294</b> | <b>147,753</b> | <b>135,706</b> | <b>103,867</b> | <b>75,616</b> |

## DETAILED STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

|                                | <b>18/19</b>   | <b>17/18</b>   | <b>16/17</b>   | <b>15/16</b>   | <b>14/15</b>   |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>       |
| Staff costs                    | 318,740        | 291,840        | 217,343        | 181,050        | 111,586        |
| Other staff costs              | 36             | 1,434          | 8,338          | -              | -              |
| Costs of raising funds         | 12,120         | 19,137         | 24,212         | 13,473         | 3,066          |
| Costs of charitable activities | 28,987         | 18,565         | 20,849         | 61,553         | 38,501         |
| Rent and office running costs  | 33,888         | 24,403         | 19,507         | 10,920         | 7,657          |
| Insurance                      | 1,847          | 1,800          | 1,749          | 1,156          | 1,053          |
| Advertising and marketing      | 2,371          | 1,888          | 2,009          | 1,086          | 3,406          |
| Printing, postage, stationery  | 773            | 1,137          | 9,226          | 6,640          | -              |
| Staff development              | 3,831          | 4,893          | 4,664          | 3,273          | -              |
| Travel and subsistence         | 18,287         | 14,256         | 18,830         | 10,077         | -              |
| Website                        | 673            | -              | 2,156          | 684            | 4,884          |
| Evaluation and consultancy     | 36,037         | 26,033         | -              | 7,195          | 6,620          |
| Accountancy costs              | 4,650          | 4,443          | 2,274          | 2,550          | 1,330          |
| Independent examination costs  | 900            | 900            | 900            | 750            | 700            |
| Subscriptions                  | 948            | 1,237          | 1,376          | 1,972          | -              |
| Telephone and internet         | 5,095          | 3,967          | 2,130          | 2,388          | -              |
| Management recharge            | 9,280          | -              | -              | -              | -              |
| Depreciation                   | 2,151          | 1,637          | 1,610          | 1,028          | 803            |
| <b>Total expenditure</b>       | <b>480,614</b> | <b>425,797</b> | <b>337,173</b> | <b>306,274</b> | <b>179,606</b> |

All figures are taken from North London Cares' annual accounts 2018/19, submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.

# OUR SUPPORTERS

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# OUR INFLUENCE

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North London Cares plays a significant role in the wider development of policy, awareness and good practice on the issues of loneliness, generational division and disconnection.

In 2018 we worked closely with government on the development of the world's first ever national loneliness strategy which was launched with a visit from the former 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 also regularly appears in the national and international media.

In 2018 our Founder and CEO, Alex Smith, was also appointed to as one of the inaugural 20 Obama 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 which is now expanding across South Yorkshire.

The  
Economist

  
THE TIMES

BBC  
WORLD  
SERVICE

itvNEWS

Chicago  
Tribune

4 News

The  
Guardian

THE  
HILL

The  
Telegraph

# OUR TEAM

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## **EMILY GROVES**

HEAD OF PROGRAMMES (MATERNITY COVER)

Emily is Head of Programmes (Maternity Cover), overseeing all North London Cares' programmes and partnerships and managing the team.

## **LAURA DE SOUZA**

HEAD OF PROGRAMMES (ON MATERNITY LEAVE)

Laura has been Head of Programmes at North London Cares for six years. She 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 as the participation coordinator for Age UK Islington.

## **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.

## **BOUCHRA AITLKABOUD**

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR  
(LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR)

Bouchra looks after Love Your Neighbour in Camden, facilitating one-to-one friendships between younger and older neighbours. She previously worked in the travel industry.

## **ROXANNE RUSTEM**

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR  
(OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEERS)

Roxanne manages our growing volunteer network and leads on reaching older north Londoners. She has been with North London Cares for three years.

## **VICTORIA BUCKLE**

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

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

## **IMOGEN DUFFIN**

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Imogen helps our fabulous supporters to fundraise for North London Cares through events, challenges and other activities.

North London Cares is supported by colleagues from The Cares Family, who also work across our sibling charities in south London, east London, Manchester and Liverpool.

**Charlie Jamieson** is Director of Programmes.

**Emily Quilter** is Director of Development (on Maternity Leave).

**Ellenor Baron** is Director of Development (Maternity Cover).

**Catrin Thomas** is Head of Development.

**Jane East** is Managing Director.

**Alex Smith** is Founder and Chief Executive.

# OUR TRUSTEES

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## **BEN WILSON**

### INTERIM CHAIR

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 a Growth Equity Investor at Generation Investment Management. He was formerly at CDC Group and 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 Campaign Director at Make My Money Matter, helping people to make more environmentally sustainable investments. He was formerly is Special Adviser to the Executive Director at the ONE Campaign, worked on strategy for education charity Ark, at Educate Girls and at The Prince's Trust.

## **JAMES LEE**

### TRUSTEE

James has had a long career in local government, where his responsibilities include safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation. He has been part of The Cares Family since 2013.

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

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It's been another inspiring year at North London Cares. We've mobilised more younger and older people to share time and new experiences through more social clubs and Love Your Neighbour friendships than ever. We've developed new partnerships with local businesses, government and health organisations. And we've set in train exciting plans for 2020 and beyond.

That matters, because loneliness is increasingly recognised as one of the major challenges of our time. When we first started North London Cares in 2011, loneliness was identified predominantly as an occasional and inevitable personal emotion – no different from longing or homesickness. Then it was acknowledged as a public health crisis. More recently, however, the pervasive issue of loneliness has been recognised as a political crisis too.

That's because, while we prioritise what's efficient over what's important in our society, we are spending less and less time with our neighbours and wider community than ever. Indeed, while 72% of adults in the UK believe that knowing your neighbours is important, 73% do not know their neighbours themselves. That passivity – not knowing people who are not 'like us' – is creating divisions in society.

It's reducing our empathy and leading to disconnection at the national and even international levels.

But while the problem is macro, the solution is local. Our experience – and the evidence – shows how people sharing time with neighbours from another generation in a place of meaning reduces loneliness, deepens connection, and helps older and younger people alike to feel 'part of something bigger than themselves'. At times of challenge and change, that is vital.

As part of The Cares Family of charities, North London Cares has now inspired a movement of thousands and thousands of older and younger people to get together and to build connections across the ages – connecting the past to the present to the future. As we look to that future, we're excited about the aggregate power of even more friendships, as well as the individual impact those relationships have.

We'd like to thank all our supporters, partners, donors and of course the younger and older neighbours who make this community what it is. We can't wait to share more time, laughter and new experiences with you in 2020 and beyond.

**ALEX SMITH**

FOUNDER/CEO

NORTH LONDON CARES AND THE CARES FAMILY

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

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The more things change, the more they stay the same. This year at North London Cares and in the wider Cares Family we've spent a lot of time growing, developing and transitioning into an established charity, with impact at the local level and influence at the national and international levels. We've hired new colleagues. We've developed a new strategy that will help us to continue to progress in the years to come. And we've added East London Cares to the growing group of siblings.

As we look to 2020, we're excited about what's to come. Specifically, The Cares Family is piloting ambitious new projects. The first – our new '3G Social Clubs' bringing older people together with new parents and their young children – will take place right here in north London, just across the border in Haringey and Waltham Forest. Our second new project – 'The Multiplier' – will help us to share our learning about building communities to reduce loneliness and broader disconnection with people leading projects in their own communities in their own ways.

As we've grown into a national group of charities, however, we've also been careful to ensure that North London Cares remains rooted – representing our unique home boroughs of Camden and Islington and the people and places that make this area so special. We're grateful to all the local partners – from councils to corporations – who have supported us in so many ways.

Finally, I want to place on record, on behalf of the whole Board, our thanks to Josie Cluer, who departed as Chair of North London Cares and The Cares Family last year. Josie joined the board of a small community project in 2012 and in seven years has created a remarkable legacy.

My job in the coming year is to build on that strong platform to help North London Cares to bring even more older and younger neighbours together, to continue to innovate, and to make sure we are living up to our founding mission: 'connecting people, building communities.'

**BEN WILSON**

INTERIM CHAIR  
NORTH LONDON CARES AND THE CARES FAMILY



NORTH LONDON CARES

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