



**Connecting  
communities**

Annual Review 2024

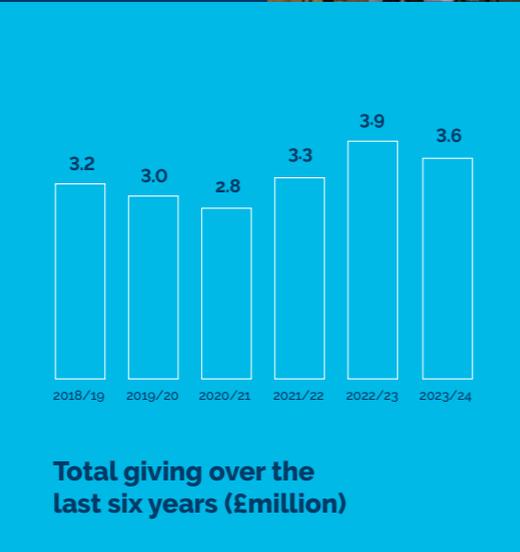
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The winners of the 2024 Foundation Awards



Watch a video from the event here:



Cover story  
Ambition Aspire Achieve

Ambition Aspire Achieve (AAA) supports young people to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential. 30% of young people supported have special educational needs or disabilities. They are one of our partners from Year 2 of the Resilience Fund.

# “Young people provide us with endless motivation”



**Piers Clanford**  
Chairman,  
Berkeley Foundation

I am honoured to take up the role of Chair of Trustees of the Berkeley Foundation. Having supported this unique charity over the last 12 years from within Berkeley Group, I have seen its fantastic partnerships in action and their hugely positive impacts within our communities. My appreciation has deepened even further since becoming a Trustee.

I take over from the Foundation's founding Chair, Rob Perrins, who has led the charity since its formation in 2011 and has made an immense contribution to its work. Under his guidance, the Berkeley Foundation has grown its grant-making, deepened its impact, and developed into one of the UK's leading corporate foundations with a unique and hugely effective long term partnership model. I'm delighted that Rob will remain on the board, alongside fellow Trustees Liz Adekunle, Alison Dowsett and Wendy Pritchard.

I have spent my first few months in this new role meeting our charity partners and deepening my understanding of their work and the challenges they face. I was particularly struck by a recent visit to South London charity CARAS, who work with young refugees and asylum seekers during their first years in the UK. We cooked and shared lunch with a group of young people and heard how the charity is providing practical support and helping them build community during an immensely challenging period of their lives.



People reached in 2023/24

11,918

£941,000

This year, staff raised and donated an amazing £941,000 to the Foundation and our charity partners.

CARAS, Resilience Fund  
Year 3 Partner

Inspirational volunteers and young people, like those we met at CARAS, exist in every corner of the country and provide us with endless motivation to improve our work and deliver on our purpose. I am really proud that since the launch of our 2030 strategy three years ago, the Foundation has distributed more funding to our local communities than ever before.

In the last 12 months, we have renewed our Strategic Partnerships with Crisis and the Lord's Taverners. We are working with Crisis to take a place-based approach to tackling homelessness in Brent, supporting their work with the Local Authority and others to bring about systems change and reduce the numbers of people experiencing homelessness in the borough. The first few months of the new partnership have seen Brent become the first community in the UK to adopt Built for Zero, a ground-breaking approach to ending homelessness in a local area.

Through our renewed partnership with the Lord's Taverners, meanwhile, we will continue to support the provision of year-round cricket coaching and competition for disabled young people. Reaching over 1,500 young people each year, the new partnership supports the Taverners' goal to extend cricket provision into every community and every SEND school in the UK. It will also see us working with the Berkeley Group business to provide employability sessions for young people taking part in the programme.

As well as supporting brilliant frontline work, the Berkeley Foundation is committed to strengthening the voluntary sector during what has been an extremely challenging few years. We have continued our programme of unrestricted cost-of-living grants this year, and have also been working with 20 small-to-medium sized charities and Community Interest Companies (CICs) through our Resilience Fund, which aims to help build resilience for the future. Ten youth employment organisations, and ten organisations supporting the mental health of young people from global majority communities, are taking part.

None of this would be possible without the support of incredible colleagues from across Berkeley Group, who give their time, skills and money to support the work of the Foundation. This year, staff raised and donated an amazing £941,000 to the Foundation and our charity partners. They also volunteered a record-breaking 1,992 hours of their time. 61% of Berkeley colleagues chose to get involved in our work – a figure we are justifiably proud of.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Looking ahead, the Berkeley Foundation remains absolutely committed to supporting young people and communities to thrive. We will be investing more than £10 million in our local communities over the next three years, deepening our existing partnerships, and developing some exciting new ones. I am very much looking forward to supporting the excellent Berkeley Foundation team to take our work forward and fulfil our purpose, *'to ensure young people and their communities have the tools and resources they need to thrive and be a force for change in the world.'*

**Piers Clanford**  
Chairman, Berkeley Foundation

**Our investment**

**£3.6m**

We distributed £3.6 million to our partner charities through grants, staff fundraising and payroll giving donations.

**£941,000**

Berkeley staff raised £941,000 for the Foundation and our charity partners.

**Berkeley staff involvement**

**61%**

of Berkeley staff got involved with the Foundation this year.

**29%**

of employees signed up to our payroll giving scheme.

**1,992**

Berkeley staff volunteered 1,992 hours with our charity partners.

**Our impact**

**11,918**

We reached 11,918 people through our charity partnerships.

# Our year in focus

At the Berkeley Foundation, we make grants to expert charities, supporting their work with young people and communities in the areas where Berkeley Group operates. Berkeley staff also volunteer with our charity partners, and organise fundraising events. This page gives a snapshot of the grants we have given across London, Birmingham and the South of England in 2023/24.

**Giving by goal**

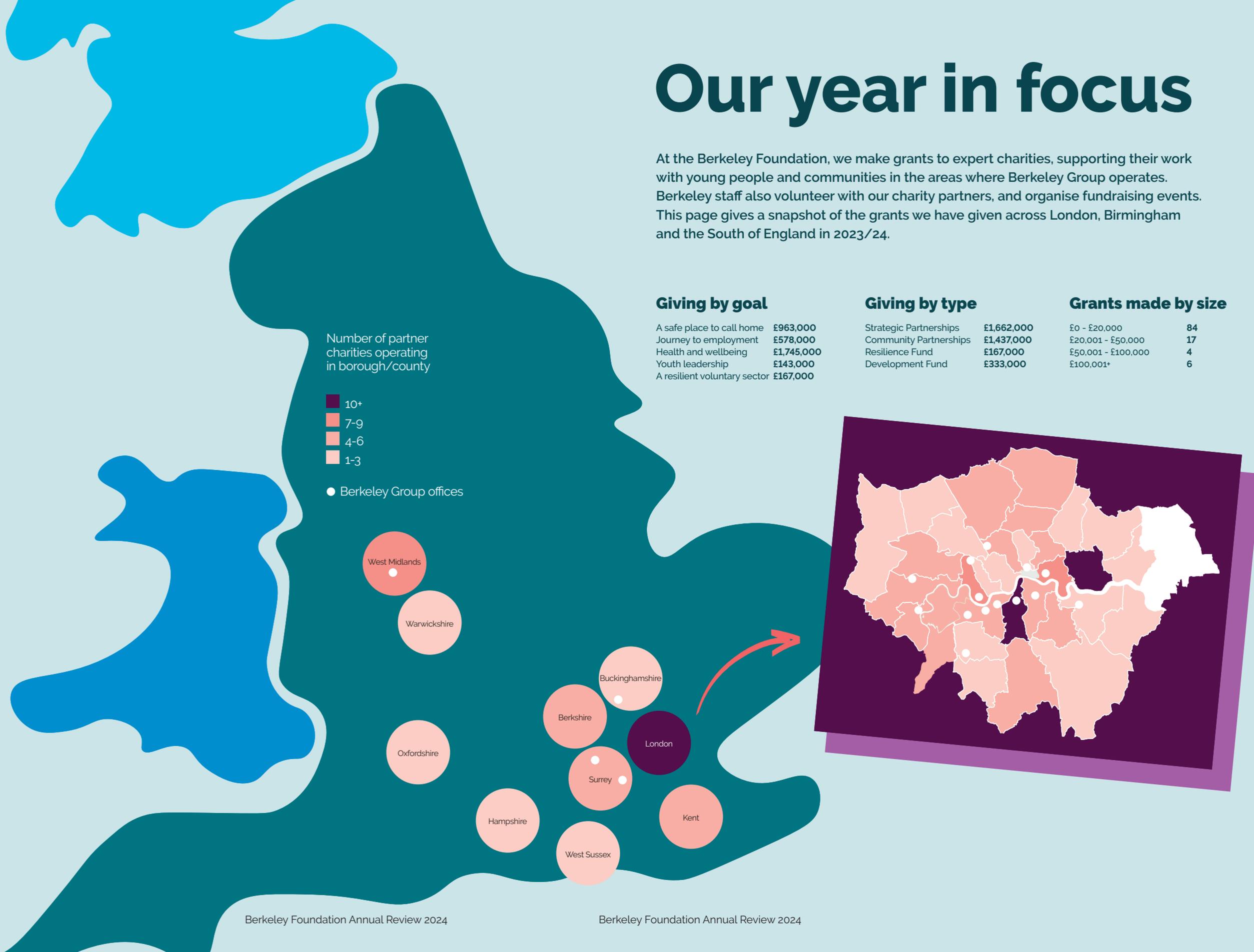
A safe place to call home	£963,000
Journey to employment	£578,000
Health and wellbeing	£1,745,000
Youth leadership	£143,000
A resilient voluntary sector	£167,000

**Giving by type**

Strategic Partnerships	£1,662,000
Community Partnerships	£1,437,000
Resilience Fund	£167,000
Development Fund	£333,000

**Grants made by size**

£0 - £20,000	84
£20,001 - £50,000	17
£50,001 - £100,000	4
£100,001+	6



Our vision is that young people and their communities will have the tools and resources to thrive and be a force for change in the world.

We work with expert frontline charities across London, Birmingham and the South of England to drive change across five impact goals.



# Working in partnership

To help us reach our goals, we work with between 40 and 50 expert charities at any one time. We take a long-term, relational approach to our funding, building trust-based relationships with the organisations we support. Our partnerships fall into four categories:

### Strategic Partnerships

We have a small number of long-term Strategic Partnerships with organisations that share our goals and values. We aim to create transformational change through these relationships, drawing on the full range of support from our colleagues across Berkeley.

### Community Partnerships

Each Berkeley Group operating business selects a local charity to partner with. These are usually small-to-medium sized organisations working in the local area, and provide a focus for staff fundraising and volunteering.

### Resilience Fund

Our newest funding programme offers grants and support to small-to-medium sized charities to invest in their organisational development, building resilience for the future.

### Development Fund

A flexible funding pot that allows the Foundation to explore new ideas and respond to opportunities that don't easily fit into the three main funding streams.



Kitchen Social programme by the Mayor's Fund for London

“ Last quarter has seen our biggest increase in demand ever. It's thanks to your ongoing support and flexibility in the face of this ongoing crisis that means we can continue to support all young people who need us and give their potential a home. ”

**Lucy Nichols**  
Corporate Partnerships Manager,  
New Horizon Youth Centre

“ Ultimately, we wouldn't be able to feed young people in the holidays without Kitchen Social. It allows us to meet and support young people where they're at, in the way they need. ”

**Jamal Edward Delve**  
Kitchen Social Hub

Our 2030 strategy is underpinned by five commitments about the way we'll work to achieve our goals. Here's an outline of the progress we have made against these commitments over the last twelve months.

# How we work

## PARTNERSHIP: We'll build partnerships with expert charities, investing in their work to help communities thrive.

### This year....

- We extended the partnerships with five of our current charity partners.
- The average length of our grant agreements is 2.7 years.
- We increased the proportion of our total funding that is unrestricted or allocated to core costs from 46% to 51%. This included £197,000 in unrestricted funding distributed in response to the ongoing cost of living crisis.

**"The grant is enabling us to add to our core team, so that we can develop our strategy to reach even more children."**  
Success Club, Year 2 Resilience Fund Partner

## ADDING VALUE: We'll add value to our partnerships through our expertise, networks and relationship with Berkeley Group.

### This year....

- 61% of Berkeley staff got involved in our work through fundraising, volunteering or payroll giving.
- Staff raised £941,000 for the Foundation and our charity partners, and volunteered 1,992 hours of their time – more than ever before.
- We delivered a programme of learning events for our Resilience Fund partners, including a popular session on financial resilience for small charities.

**"Excellent session that added a really simple clarity to thinking about financial resilience."**  
Resilience Fund Partner

## LEARNING AND SHARING: We'll learn from our work and share our learning across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

### This year....

- We supported partners to undertake new research into issues such as holiday activity and food provision, and financial education for care leavers.
- We shared our work externally through articles and blogs, including this piece in Alliance magazine about the first year of the Resilience Fund.



Read 'The power of learning and sharing' in Alliance Magazine here.

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: We'll ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do.

### This year....

- We launched our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plan, setting out our priorities for EDI within our organisation, and through our grant-making activities.
- We introduced the DEI Data Standard into our grant application form, and began collecting EDI data from grant applicants for the first time.



You can read our DEI plan here



## YOUTH PARTICIPATION: We'll enable young people to play an active role in the Foundation's work.

### This year....

- We have been working with young people from youth homelessness charity St Basils, who have supported our work in a range of ways:
  1. Sharing their experiences with Berkeley staff for World Homeless Day
  2. Advising on the design of the third year of our Resilience Fund, which focused on youth homelessness
  3. Reviewing applications to the Resilience Fund and participating in the assessment process.

**"We enjoyed taking part as a team. It felt really useful and meaningful, and like we were doing something important. It also gave us a reason to hang out, which I always love: listening and learning from each other!"**  
Kip, St Basils Youth Voice



St Basils Youth Voice

## SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Over the next three years, we are planning to contribute a further **£10 million** to our local communities.

### This will include...

- Launching at least one new Strategic Partnership
- Piloting a youth advisory group to support and inform the Foundation's work
- Further developing our grant-making processes in line with feedback and best practice
- Continuing to diversify the ways Berkeley staff can add value to our work

### We are proud members of Open and Trusting Grantmaking and 360 Giving.

- View our Open and Trusting Grantmaking commitments here:



- View our 360 Giving data here:



# Our unique relationship with Berkeley Group

We are the corporate foundation of Berkeley Group. Berkeley provides core funding and support services to the Foundation, enabling us to focus on maximising our impact in local communities.

We work closely with colleagues and supply chain companies across Berkeley Group, who support our charity partners with volunteering, fundraising, gifts-in-kind and pro-bono time.

This year, 61% of Berkeley staff got involved with our activities – more than ever before. In total, they raised and donated a fantastic £941,000 for the Foundation and our charity partners.

Our Volunteering Hub provides staff with easy access to volunteering opportunities across our partnerships. Berkeley staff gave 1,992 volunteering hours this year, ranging from gardening, to painting, to mentoring and employability workshops.



Black tie boxing event, organised by Berkeley St Edward

“ The Berkeley Black Tie Boxing event is an absolute highlight for us as charity partner. It is so impactful to spend time in the company of the awesome contractors and Berkeley staff whose generosity and hard work makes such a difference to our community of young people. ”

**Gabriel Green**  
Deputy, Triangle Adventure Playground



St James hosting a football tournament



St Joseph colleagues taking part in St Basil's Big Sleepout



Berkeley Modular colleagues taking part in Tough Mudder

“ Volunteering at Imperial's Maker Challenge event was an incredible experience! Witnessing the impact of the outreach programme on these budding STEM enthusiasts was not only an inspiration but also a testament to the power of hands-on learning and exploration. ”

**Georgia Flood**  
Commercial Graduate, Berkeley Capital



Berkeley Group and BGIT conquering the Yorkshire Three Peaks



Berkeley Oxford & Chiltern taking on the Yorkshire Three Peaks

Watch this film for a snapshot of some of the activities that took place this year.



St George hosting a visit from Honeypot Children's Charity at the Woodberry Wetlands



The fantastic Berkeley Foundation Awards 2024 winners



Berkeley East Thames volunteering at Demelza



Berkeley Capital's annual Dragon Boat race



Chairman Piers Clanford and a team of St George colleagues volunteering at SPEAR London

**Our charity partners:**

**Strategic Partners**  
 Crisis  
 MyBnk  
 New Horizon Youth Centre

**Community Partners**  
 SPEAR  
 St Basils

### Understanding the need

**Rising youth homelessness**  
 Youth homelessness has continued to rise rapidly over the last year. There are a range of reasons why a young person might become homeless, from breakdown in family relationships, to leaving Home Office accommodation, to financial hardship. Young people leaving care face some of the most significant challenges, and there has been a 33% rise in care leavers facing homelessness since 2018-19.<sup>1</sup> These young people often face a 'cliff-edge' in support once they turn 18, and find themselves living independently from a younger age than many of their peers.<sup>2</sup>

**Safe and stable accommodation**  
 Research has shown that more than 4 million homes are missing from the UK housing market, compared to the average European country, and the private rented sector is at saturation point.<sup>3</sup> There is a need for more suitable accommodation – both temporary and permanent – for young people experiencing homelessness. Without somewhere safe, affordable and stable to stay, addressing other challenges can be next to impossible. From a secure base, and with the right support, young people can begin to look forward to the future.

**Improving homelessness systems**  
 People experiencing homelessness are often in touch with multiple agencies, from Local Authority housing teams, to healthcare providers, to charities providing a range of different services. Working together is key to helping people end their homelessness. Place-based approaches, cross-sector partnerships and multi-agency working can all help improve people's experiences and contribute to individual and systemic change.

### Our role

**Tackling youth homelessness**  
 Preventing and mitigating youth homelessness has continued to be at the heart of our work. Our Strategic Partnership with MyBnk builds vital money management and independent living skills among young people at risk of homelessness, while New Horizon Youth Centre and St Basils are on the front line of the homelessness crisis, providing vital support and helping young people access housing through their centres in Camden and Birmingham. This year, we supported New Horizon's #PlanForThe136k campaign, which called on Government to establish a national youth homelessness strategy and has led to the first Parliamentary debate on youth homelessness in 40 years.

**Place-based approaches**  
 Over the last four years, we have been working closely with Crisis and Brent Council to develop a place-based approach to tackling homelessness in Brent. An external evaluation of this work has found that the approach is creating a safe space for local agencies to collaborate and share data, and has led to faster resolutions for people experiencing homelessness in the borough. We're delighted to have renewed our partnership in Brent for a further three years.

**Adding value**  
 This year, Berkeley colleagues helped renovate the courtyard at the new Crisis Brent Skylight Centre, so that members can enjoy a peaceful outside space. St George also supported the development of Crisis' Homelessness Covenant, through which employers can pledge to prevent and end homelessness through inclusive and supportive employment practices. St George has recently offered jobs to two Crisis members at its Grand Union development.

**Our investment in 2023/24**

**£ 963,000**

We invested £963,000 in 2023/24 in charities working to give everyone a safe and sustainable place to call home.

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**Our impact in 2023/24**

**1,273**

Our partnerships supported 1,273 people experiencing or at risk of homelessness this year.

Impact goal

1

# A safe place to call home



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-67123405>

<sup>2</sup> <https://becomecharity.org.uk/become-the-movement/our-campaigns/ending-the-carecliff/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/the-housebuilding-crisis/>

Our seven-year partnership with **MyBnk** supports The Money House, a financial education programme for young people at risk of homelessness. This year, the partnership has supported the delivery of over 100 training courses to more than 700 young people across London and the Midlands.

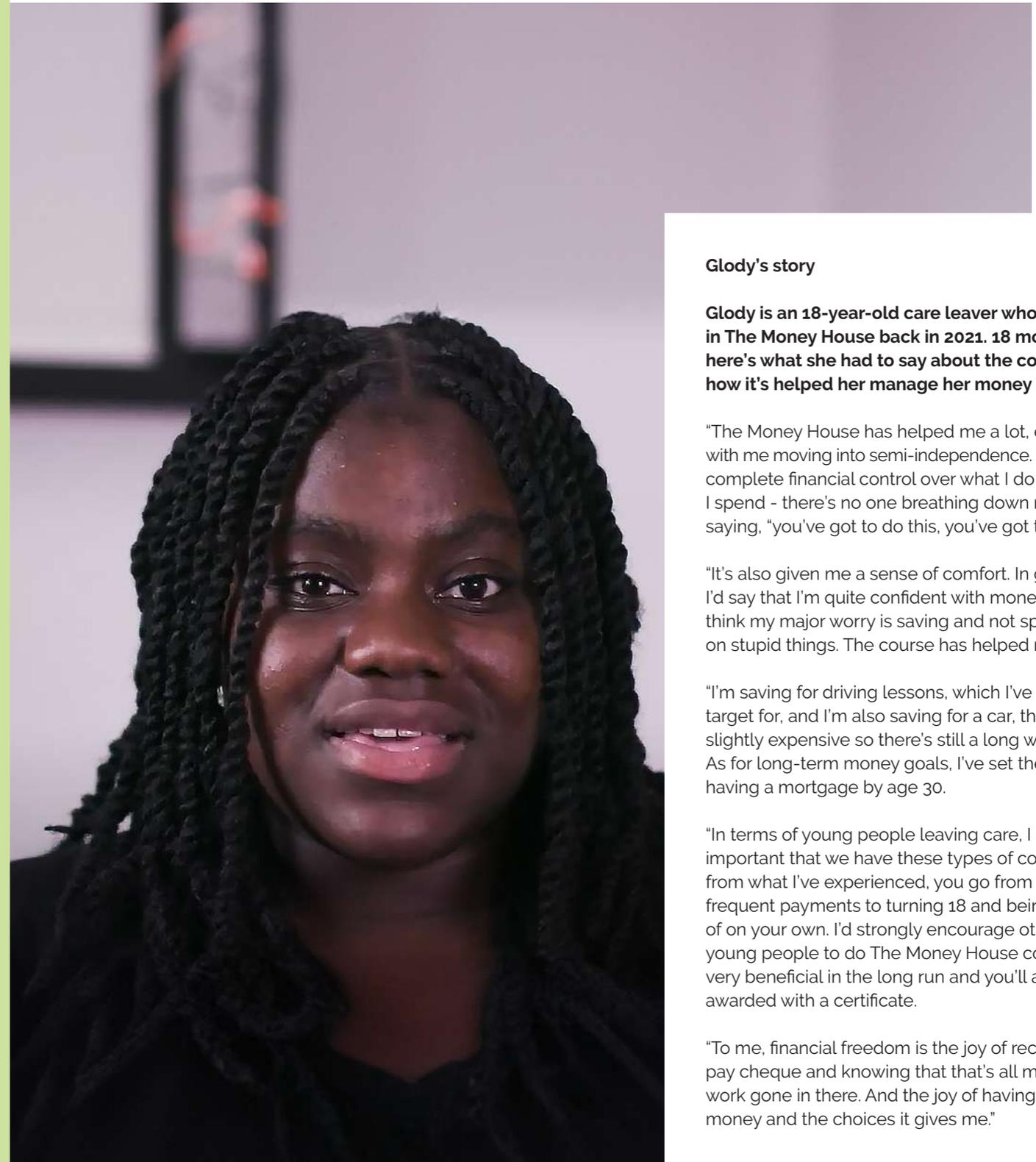
We also collaborated on new research into the financial education available to young people leaving the care system. Timely financial education is particularly critical for this group of young people; the research found that there is much more to be done to ensure consistent support across the country.

**‘I now have complete financial control over what I do and what I spend’**

**Glody**  
20, Money House participant



Read more about MyBnk's research into how we can help young adults with care experience achieve financial wellbeing



**Glody's story**

**Glody is an 18-year-old care leaver who took part in The Money House back in 2021. 18 months on, here's what she had to say about the course and how it's helped her manage her money better.**

"The Money House has helped me a lot, especially with me moving into semi-independence. I now have complete financial control over what I do and what I spend - there's no one breathing down my neck saying, "you've got to do this, you've got to do that".

"It's also given me a sense of comfort. In general, I'd say that I'm quite confident with money, but I think my major worry is saving and not spending on stupid things. The course has helped me reflect.

"I'm saving for driving lessons, which I've met the target for, and I'm also saving for a car, though it's slightly expensive so there's still a long way to go. As for long-term money goals, I've set the target of having a mortgage by age 30.

"In terms of young people leaving care, I think it's important that we have these types of courses as, from what I've experienced, you go from getting frequent payments to turning 18 and being kind of on your own. I'd strongly encourage other young people to do The Money House course. It's very beneficial in the long run and you'll also be awarded with a certificate.

"To me, financial freedom is the joy of receiving my pay cheque and knowing that that's all my hard work gone in there. And the joy of having my own money and the choices it gives me."



**At 20 years old, university student Zephyr suddenly had to leave his family home in East London after family relationships broke down.**

He had nowhere else to go, so spent a week on the streets of London, which he describes as "awful". He struggled to find food, so spent much of the week starving, not being able to sleep or think properly.

During this time Zephyr came across New Horizon Youth Centre, where he received food and showers, and support workers were able to help him access emergency accommodation. However, he was developing severe issues with his mental health due to being homeless, and had to drop out of university.

Zephyr was quickly supported by the Housing Advice team into a hostel, where he stayed and volunteered for a few months.

He developed great relationships with the youth workers at New Horizon Youth Centre and got fully involved with daily activities. He was also given support for his mental and physical health from the Health team. Being off the streets and in stable accommodation allowed Zephyr to focus on his future.

Zephyr was given career advice and job application support by the Jobs Education and Training team, and he is now in full-time employment as a support assistant for a social housing association in London!

He was recently further supported by the Housing Advice team into a longer-term accommodation where he is able to support himself financially.

\*Name changed for safeguarding and sensitivity.

Photo is of a young man supported by New Horizon.  
Credit: New Horizon Youth Centre 2023.

Our partnership with **New Horizon Youth Centre** supports the charity's frontline services for young Londoners experiencing homelessness. This includes its housing services, supporting young people into long-term accommodation; and its life skills drop in service, helping young people to develop independent living skills. We are also funding a new Referrals Coordinator role, which aims to improve young people's experiences of accessing support.

This year, our partnership has helped 20 young people secure employment or get back into education or training. It has also enabled at least 15 young people, like Zephyr, to move into long-term accommodation.

**‘My dream is to become a youth worker to help other young people in situations like my own’**

**Zephyr\***

Young person supported by New Horizon Youth Centre

**NH  
YC** NEW  
HORIZON  
YOUTH  
CENTRE

Since 2013, the Berkeley Foundation has committed over £2 million towards **Crisis'** work to end homelessness. Last April we launched our tenth year of partnership, supporting Crisis' frontline work with homeless people across London, and the Built for Zero programme in Brent.

Built for Zero is Crisis' approach to place-based work in Brent, bringing together local communities, service providers and Brent Council to improve local homelessness systems and enable more people to sustainably end their homelessness. Brent is one of the first communities in the UK to participate in Built for Zero (BfZ) and is trailblazing this project.

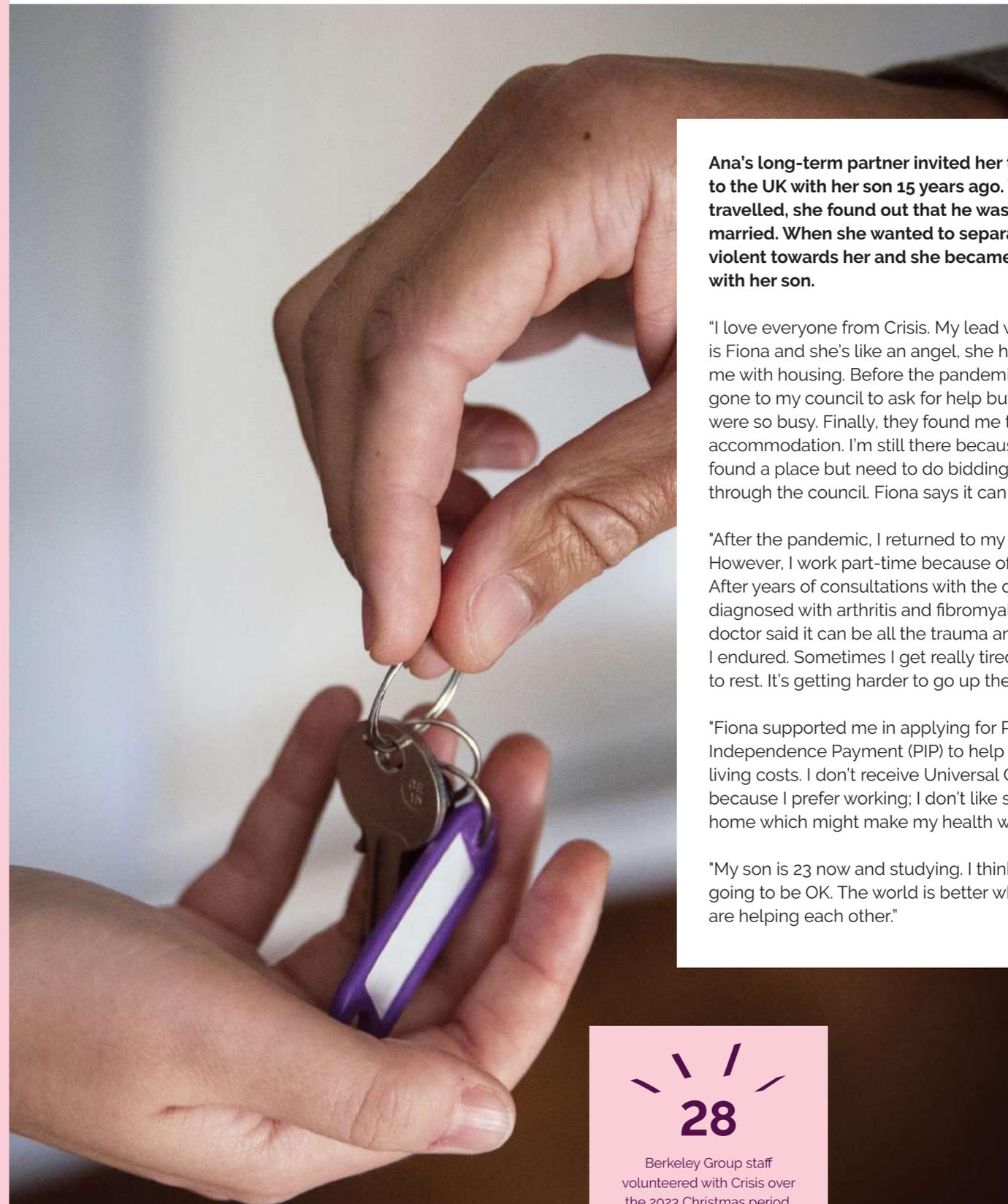
We have now committed a further £771,000 over the next three years to support Crisis' place-based work to end homelessness in Brent.

# 'The world is better when people are helping each other'

Ana  
Crisis Member



Read more about Crisis' place-based approach work to ending homelessness in Brent



Ana's long-term partner invited her to move to the UK with her son 15 years ago. When Ana travelled, she found out that he was already married. When she wanted to separate, he was violent towards her and she became homeless with her son.

"I love everyone from Crisis. My lead worker is Fiona and she's like an angel, she helped me with housing. Before the pandemic, I had gone to my council to ask for help but they were so busy. Finally, they found me temporary accommodation. I'm still there because we found a place but need to do bidding for a home through the council. Fiona says it can take years.

"After the pandemic, I returned to my old job. However, I work part-time because of my health. After years of consultations with the doctor, I got diagnosed with arthritis and fibromyalgia. My doctor said it can be all the trauma and suffering I endured. Sometimes I get really tired and need to rest. It's getting harder to go up the stairs.

"Fiona supported me in applying for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to help with the living costs. I don't receive Universal Credit because I prefer working; I don't like staying at home which might make my health worse.

"My son is 23 now and studying. I think we are going to be OK. The world is better when people are helping each other."

28

Berkeley Group staff volunteered with Crisis over the 2023 Christmas period.



Young women's Street Elite cohort in Lambeth

Impact goal

2

# Journey to employment

### Our investment in 2023/24

## £ 578,000

We invested £578,000 in 2023/24 in charities working to make sure all young people are prepared for work and have the opportunity to build a sustainable career.

### Our impact in 2023/24

## 456

Our partnerships supported 456 people facing barriers to work.



### Our charity partners

**Strategic Partners**  
Imperial College London  
The Change Foundation

**Community Partners**  
Gifted Young Generation  
Vauxhall City Farm

## Understanding the need

### Rising youth unemployment

Youth unemployment has been rising since Summer 2022. 540,000 young people aged 16 to 24 were unemployed in September to November 2023, an increase of 13,000 from the previous quarter and 79,000 more than the year before.<sup>1</sup> Since the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, we have seen a withdrawal of Government funding for initiatives to address youth unemployment. The Kickstart Scheme has come to an end, and funding for Traineeships has also been withdrawn.

### Breaking down barriers to work

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are 50% more likely to find themselves not in employment, education or training than their better-off peers, even when they have similar levels of qualifications.<sup>2</sup> It is vital that we level the playing field, and give every young person the opportunity to gain skills and build a sustainable career.

### Careers for the future

Young people are over-represented in sectors that are expected to see lower employment growth and/or automation in the long term, and where vital 'stepping stone' mid-skill jobs are in decline.<sup>3</sup> Many organisations deliver employability support to young people at risk of becoming unemployed, but challenges remain around transforming this support into real-world job opportunities that meet the needs and expectations of both young people and employers – now, and for the future.

## Our role

### Tackling youth unemployment

Delivered by our Strategic Partner The Change Foundation, Street Elite uses sport and mentoring to engage young people who are impacted by violence, crime and inequality. These young people are not in employment, education or training, and are often completely disengaged from services in their local area. The Change Foundation's coach mentors work with them over time to build trust and help them re-engage with work, college, or higher education.

### Building aspirations

Working with young people from an earlier age to broaden ambitions, build aspirations, and inspire them about the range of careers available to them can help lay the foundations for future success. Our work with Imperial College London enables young people aged 11-18 to try their hand at design and making, and gives them the chance to prototype their own products. This helps build both soft skills and technical know-how, and supports engagement in STEM careers.

### Adding value

Thanks to our relationship with Berkeley Group, we are able to host construction site visits and offer work experience placements to young people supported by our charity partners. In addition, colleagues have volunteered on the Maker Challenge programmes at Imperial College London, and held sessions on employability and how to find a job with disabled young people supported by our partners AFK and Lord's Taverners.

<sup>1</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn05871/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ukyouth.org/2023/08/policy-update-august/>

<sup>3</sup> Youth Futures Foundation. 2021. A Better Future: Transforming jobs and skills for young people post-pandemic.

[https://youthfuturesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/A-Better-Future-Transforming-jobs-and-skills-for-young-people-post-pandemic\\_0.pdf](https://youthfuturesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/A-Better-Future-Transforming-jobs-and-skills-for-young-people-post-pandemic_0.pdf)

At **Imperial College London's** Reach Out Makerspace in White City, young people use design and making to develop and broaden their horizons, increase their confidence, and build awareness of different routes into further education and employment.

We support two programmes hosted at the Makerspace: the Maker Challenge for 14-18 year olds and the Proto-Maker Challenge for 11-14 year olds. More than 1,200 young people have taken part in these programmes since 2017.

In 2023 we renewed our partnership for another three years, committing a further £600,000 to support increased provision and accessibility, more employment opportunities for young people and better local community engagement.

# 'This collaborative environment fosters a culture of innovation and learning'

**Yllka Llazani**

Winner of Maker Challenge, Cohort 21

**IMPERIAL**



## Yllka's story

**"As a Makerspace graduate I had the privilege of attending several enlightening offsite tours, including three visits to Berkeley St James, as well as tours of HS2, Urban, and Autolus. Each tour provided valuable insights into the industry landscape.**

"One of the highlights was undeniably the connections I formed throughout these experiences. Networking with professionals in the field enriched my understanding and opened doors to new opportunities. Building meaningful relationships with like-minded individuals has been instrumental in my personal and professional growth, and I'm excited about the possibilities that lie ahead because of these connections.

"The most invaluable aspect of Makerspace is the freedom it offers to create without constraints. Having access to top-notch equipment and materials, coupled with guidance from knowledgeable professionals, is truly empowering. It eliminates the worry of financial barriers that often accompany personal projects, allowing individuals to unleash their creativity and bring their ideas to life. This collaborative environment fosters a culture of innovation and learning, making the Makerspace an invaluable resource for aspiring creators and innovators.

"Looking ahead, I'm excited about the prospect of pursuing an apprenticeship in architecture. The tours have been invaluable in broadening my perspective on the diverse applications of an architecture degree. Witnessing firsthand how architectural principles are put into practice in various contexts has not only sparked my imagination but also provided clarity on the multitude of pathways available within the field. These experiences have reinforced my passion for architecture and deepened my commitment to pursuing it as a career."

The Berkeley St James team host construction site visits for young people from Imperial College London to learn about the industry and hear about different career paths.

Many of the coaches and support staff at The Change Foundation are former programme participants. Grace was part of the 2014 Street Elite cohort. She is now a permanent employee at The Change Foundation, working as a Trusts and Foundations & Mental Health Support Officer.

**How does your past experience as a Street Elite participant help you in your work with young people taking part in the programme today?**

When working as a coach mentor it helped me build relationships with young people that had depth. My lived experience gave me a lens into their world, accompanied with understanding and empathy. It also helped me to value, prioritise and serve them in a way that I was served, whilst continuing to learn from them as our experiences were similar but separate and unique.

In my current role, I use my lived and learned experience to convey the impact of the charity through bid-writing, helping the charity that has been instrumental in changing my life to stay running to continue to impact many.

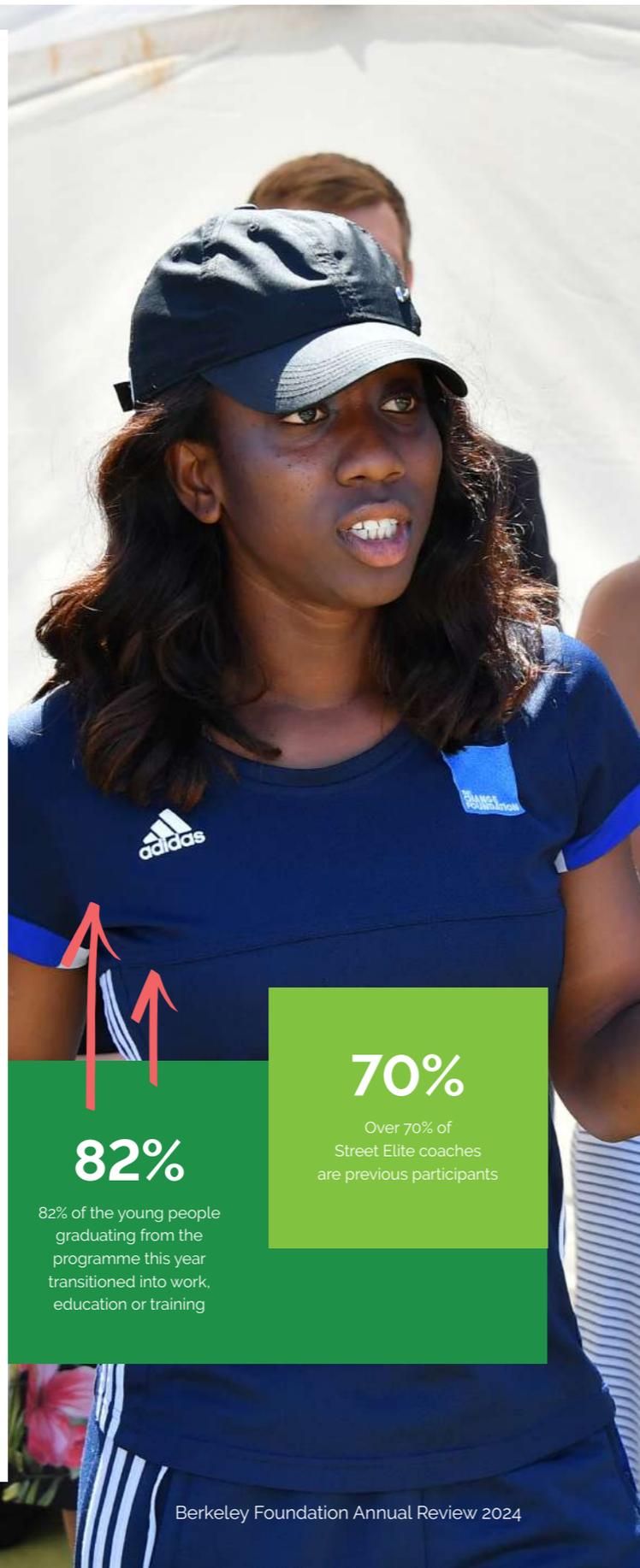
**How do you think Street Elite is different from other sports or mentoring programmes available to young people?**

What I have consistently observed from being a participant, to a coach mentor, and to working alongside other coach mentors, is the heart for young people. This is demonstrated not just in the work done but the way coach mentors work and prioritise young people. From the extra hours of mentoring and support, to being a trustworthy, stable and consistent voice of reason and guidance for young people who have no one else. The coach mentors also see beyond face value, finding good in young people who have been negatively labelled as bad, criminals etc, and give them opportunities to do and be more.

**What's the best part about your job?**

The opportunity to work with young people, while using my experiences and learning to help them as I learn in return, is a privilege. I love hearing of and seeing their transformations. To see their self-concept, confidence and esteem grow, while they let go of the negative stereotypes and expectations they once lived by is priceless!

Change takes place when young people see themselves as having value and worth, and Street Elite and the coach mentors play a great role in facilitating this.



Our Strategic Partnership with **The Change Foundation** delivers Street Elite, a nine-month programme which uses sports coaching and mentoring to engage young people who are impacted by violence, crime and inequality. Street Elite works with 140 young people across London and Birmingham each year, and 80% of them get back into employment, education or training following the programme.

# ‘Change takes place when young people see themselves as having value and worth’

**Grace Ekwuba Padonu**  
Trusts and Foundations & Mental Health Support Officer,  
The Change Foundation

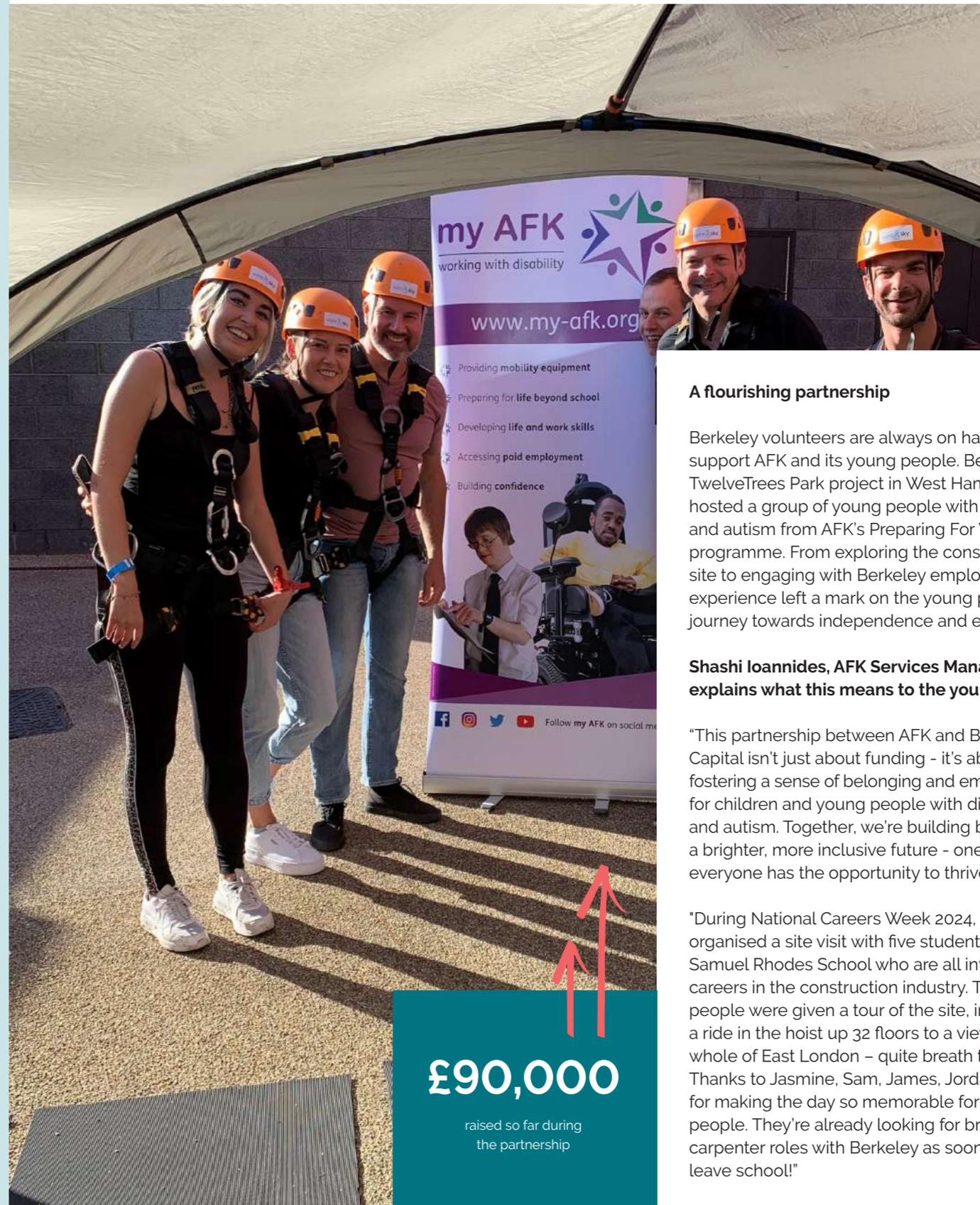


Children and young people with disabilities and autism can face huge barriers to accessing high-quality education and employment opportunities. **AFK** provides a range of services to address these challenges, including life-changing mobility equipment, bespoke employment skills and work experience programmes, and mental health and wellbeing support.

Berkeley Capital has been working with AFK since 2020. The funds the team raises make a massive difference to the lives of the children, young people and families AFK works with every day. Most recently, the two organisations have been working together to give young people a taste of the construction industry.

# ‘It’s about fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment’

**Shashi Ioannides**  
AFK Services Manager



### A flourishing partnership

Berkeley volunteers are always on hand to support AFK and its young people. Berkeley's TwelveTrees Park project in West Ham recently hosted a group of young people with disabilities and autism from AFK's Preparing For Work programme. From exploring the construction site to engaging with Berkeley employees, the experience left a mark on the young people's journey towards independence and employment.

### Shashi Ioannides, AFK Services Manager, explains what this means to the young people:

"This partnership between AFK and Berkeley Capital isn't just about funding - it's about fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment for children and young people with disabilities and autism. Together, we're building bridges to a brighter, more inclusive future - one where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

"During National Careers Week 2024, we organised a site visit with five students from Samuel Rhodes School who are all interested in careers in the construction industry. The young people were given a tour of the site, including a ride in the hoist up 32 floors to a view of the whole of East London - quite breath taking! Thanks to Jasmine, Sam, James, Jordan and Cam for making the day so memorable for our young people. They're already looking for bricklayer and carpenter roles with Berkeley as soon as they leave school!"



Young people at Streatham Youth and Community Trust, a Kitchen Social Hub

Impact goal

3

# Health and wellbeing

### Our investment in 2023/24

**£ 1,745,000**

We invested £1,745,000 in 2023/24 in charities working to ensure that young people and their communities have the support they need to live happier, healthier lives.

### Our impact in 2023/24

**10,098**

Our partnerships supported 10,098 people with their health and wellbeing this year.



### Our charity partners

**Strategic Partners**  
Mayor's Fund For London  
Lord's Taverners

**Community Partners**  
Action for Carers Surrey  
AFK  
Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service  
Demelza  
ellenor  
Helen & Douglas House  
Home-Start London  
Honeypot Children's Charity  
Mencap  
Momentum Children's Charity  
Rainbow Trust Children's Charity  
Rethink Mental Illness  
St Giles  
The Grange at Bookham  
Triangle Adventure Playground

**Community Investment Fund**  
Association of British Neurologists  
Anna Freud  
Khulisa  
MSTC  
Richard House Children's Hospice  
St Matthew's Project

### Understanding the need

#### The building blocks of a healthy life

The cost of living crisis is putting additional financial pressures on families, and not everyone can afford healthy and nutritious food. The Trussell Trust reported distributing more food parcels in 2023 than ever before.<sup>1</sup> In London, 800,000 children live in poverty.<sup>2</sup> Alongside healthy food, young people need access to social activities, exercise, and green space. Many young people lack opportunities to take part in regular exercise, and this increases further for disabled young people.

#### Working preventatively to help young people

The Prince's Trust NatWest Youth Index shows that young people's overall happiness and confidence remains at an all-time low, as pressures around finances and the environment weigh heavily on their minds.<sup>3</sup> Yet young people are also frequently resilient, engaged and determined to achieve their goals. Support from a trusted adult, such as a youth worker, can help young people to build the confidence they need to thrive.

#### Mental health support for all

Rates of mental health challenges among children and young people remain stubbornly high, with 20.3% of 8-16 year olds having a diagnosed disorder.<sup>4</sup> The NHS is providing support for more children and young people than ever before, but with the level of need rising and a lack of funding for preventative services, the outlook is bleak. The Children's Society is campaigning for all schools to have mental health support teams in place, with long-term funding.<sup>5</sup> NHS England is rolling out a programme to integrate mental health support within schools, but only around 50% of pupils and learners will be covered by 2025.<sup>6</sup>

### Our role

#### Food, activities and friendships

This year, we renewed our Strategic Partnership with Lord's Taverners, which offers disabled young people year-round opportunities to play cricket – both in school and in the community. Our long-term partnership with the Mayor's Fund for London, meanwhile, provides young people and their families with food and activities during the school holidays, through a network of community hubs across London.

#### Supporting young people's mental health

The second year of our Resilience Fund saw the launch of ten new partnerships with small-to-medium sized organisations working to improve the mental health of young people from Global Majority communities. We'll work with these organisations over the next two years to build resilience for the future. We also renewed our partnership with St Matthew's Project, offering direct mental health support to young people furthest away from services.

#### Adding value

Colleagues from across Berkeley Group have raised an incredible £759,000 for our health and wellbeing partner charities this year. In addition, they've volunteered their time and skills in practical ways - like helping to spruce up the facilities at Triangle Adventure Playground and clearing up the garden at Richard House Children's Hospice.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.trusselltrust.org/2023/11/08/1-5-million-food-parcels-distributed-as-need-continues-to-soar/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.childhoodtrust.org.uk/about-us/child-poverty-in-london/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://assets.ctfassets.net/q0roodynp09/3svoq1LL27AkuSqXdqFTp2/055d36a8ed41d239310396cda987feb0/The\\_Prince-s\\_Trust\\_NatWest\\_Youth\\_Index\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/q0roodynp09/3svoq1LL27AkuSqXdqFTp2/055d36a8ed41d239310396cda987feb0/The_Prince-s_Trust_NatWest_Youth_Index_2023.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2023/11/one-in-five-children-and-young-people-had-a-probable-mental-disorder-in-2023/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-we-do/blogs/long-wait-mental-health-support>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2023/11/one-in-five-children-and-young-people-had-a-probable-mental-disorder-in-2023/>



**Fuel for play, fuel for life**

For 67 years, Triangle Adventure Playground has offered young people an oasis of green space in the concrete jungle of south London. In 2017, it joined the Mayor's Fund for London's Kitchen Social programme to add healthy, nutritious hot food to its open access holiday play sessions. The partnership has enabled Triangle Adventure Playground to:

- develop an allotment space offering sustainable access to food, cultivated by the community;
- offer cooking sessions, instilling confidence and skills in young people that transcend back into the home;
- receive and distribute recipe kits to families;
- offer additional sport and play sessions;
- invest in young leaders via nutrition and food safety qualifications; and
- ensure young people and families can access hygiene and sanitary products to counteract the financial impact of the cost of living on key staple household items.

The team at Berkeley St Edward selected Triangle as one of their Community Partner charities in 2020. They have fundraised over £181,000 and volunteered 125 hours last year to help with playground renovations. The local Berkeley St Edward canteen has also served Christmas lunches and celebrated Pancake Day with the young people from Triangle.

Kitchen Social's inclusive, dignified, no stigma ethos reflects Triangle Adventure Playground's commitment to never turning a young person away who needs a meal. In the last twelve months, Kitchen Social has enabled Triangle to serve an additional 612 holiday meals – and young people have been central to designing the daily menus and cooking the food.

Jonathan Choo, Senior Playworker at Triangle Adventure Playground, reflected on Kitchen Social's impact: "It's helped established us as a dependable site for food and community support. It's not just about the meal provided, but the physical, mental and social benefits it creates for young people. The security of a hot meal brings the young people to the playground and the practice of sharing a meal together unites the community. Kitchen Social is a long-standing and impactful partnership."



The **Mayor's Fund for London's** Kitchen Social programme provides a network of hubs across London for children, young people, their families and carers to play, explore new ideas, make friends, learn and get a good balanced free meal during the school holidays. Our partnership supports 25 hubs across London, which last year served 18,763 meals to 4,595 young people.

Berkeley colleagues regularly volunteer for Kitchen Social during the school holidays. This year, 16 staff went along to a Kitchen Social hub to help set up play equipment, prepare the lunch and join in with the fun!

**‘It’s not just about the meal provided, but the physical, mental and social benefits it creates for young people’**

**Jonathan Choo**  
Senior Playworker at Triangle Adventure Playground

**MAYOR'S FUND FOR LONDON**

HELPING YOUNG LONDONERS GROW

**St Giles** is a Community Partner charity of Berkeley Capital. Their partnership is helping to fund the charity's SOS+ service, which delivers prevention and early intervention work to children and young people at risk of becoming involved in gangs, exploitation and violence; as well as training for parents and professionals.

Since 2022, Berkeley staff have raised more than £277,000 for St Giles through a range of fundraising events and payroll giving. Staff have also volunteered at the St Giles Pantry, helping to distribute food to local communities.

**‘It really opened his mind to the importance of education, which is exactly the progress you hope to achieve as a mentor’**

**Bob**  
Mentor

**St Giles**

Turning a past into a future



**Carl's\* story**

Carl aged, 15 was referred to the St Giles SOS+ service. He had been convicted for possession with intent to supply cannabis and it was clear at the time that he was also becoming attracted to gangs in the local area. Tensions started to grow among his peers, and Carl's attendance at school started to decline. Eventually, his drug use led to school exclusions, which had a hugely detrimental effect on his education.

Carl was matched with a SOS+ mentor, Bob, who worked closely with him through regular 1:1 sessions. Although Carl was reluctant at first, the pair gradually started to build trust based on their similar personal backgrounds. Slowly, Carl's attitude towards education changed. He started to focus more on his schoolwork at home with the encouragement of his mentor and committed more time to his education.

Bob focused on interventions that de-glamorised involvement in gangs and helped build resilience against all forms of exploitation. Over time, Carl's desire for positive development through education and the options it could provide increased, whilst his interest in gangs declined.

Bob comments: "The more Carl opened up to me, the more advice and support I could offer him. Eventually, he started to become proactive in seeking further support and it really opened his mind to the importance of education which is exactly the progress you hope to achieve as a mentor."

\*Name changed for safeguarding and sensitivity.

We have funded a collaboration between St Matthew's Project and Partisan, an expert mental health charity, enabling one of Partisan's clinical psychologists to work alongside staff from the charity. In the first year, the project helped upskill 18 St Matthew's Project coaches in trauma-informed approaches, and has directly supported 28 young men and women with their mental health and wellbeing. Together, St Matthew's and Partisan have delivered three strands of work:

#### Community

A safe space on Tulse Hill estate that prioritises the wellbeing of young, marginalised men, many of whom have been affected by serious violence. It offers weekly drop-in sessions for 24 men, aged 16-25, to 'hang out', build trusted relationships and have conversations addressing mental health and wellbeing.

#### School

St Matthew's is working alongside Partisan's clinical psychologist to support a group of 11 girls at City Heights School in Brixton. The activity sessions are helping the girls build self-confidence, wellbeing, and peer relationships.

One of them comments: "The project has benefited me in many ways, it made me open up and speak about my feelings. Overall, it was a 10 out of 10 experience, it made me talk about my feelings when other teachers would not listen."

#### Staff support

Partisan's clinical psychologist is working alongside St Matthew's youth coaches to support their own wellbeing and professional development. She has delivered 1:1 sessions and group training to 18 coaches with a focus on trauma-informed approaches. Coaches have commented on how 'refreshing' it is to come together and reflect as a team. They also feel that the sessions have helped them to gain confidence and improve their skills, noticing a positive impact on both themselves and the young people they work with.

One of the coaches reflected, "I found the sessions very therapeutic and transparent, as well as helpful. It's given me a path to address issues I wasn't really able to do previously. I've finally found the formula to handle participants in my current working environment. Having someone genuinely support me to problem solve and provide variety, flexibility and depth in my sessions has made my job far easier."



**St Matthew's Project** is a community-based charity offering support to young people in the Brixton and Tulse Hill areas of Lambeth, on and off the football pitch. It works with young people who are predominantly from minoritised communities and whose lives are heavily impacted by crime and violence.

**‘It’s given me a path to address issues I wasn’t really able to do previously’**

**St Matthew's Project coach**





A cohort from the Groundwork London Youth Leadership programme

Our investment in 2023/24

£ 143,000

We invested £143,000 in 2023/24 in charities working to make sure young people can positively impact their own lives and the communities in which they live.

Our impact in 2023/24

91

Our partnerships supported 91 people to gain skills and knowledge to take on leadership roles.

Impact goal

4

Youth Leadership

Understanding the need

Building leadership skills

Young people are disproportionately affected by many of today's biggest challenges, including the mental health crisis, lack of affordable housing options, the cost of living crisis, and climate change. It is critical that young people are supported to be part of decisions that concern them and their future – and to develop into the leaders of tomorrow.

Valuing lived experience

Recent research found evidence of a stark class divide in the UK voluntary sector, with charities and funders hiring for 'privilege rather than potential'.<sup>1</sup> More value needs to be placed on the expertise of those with lived experience of the issues the sector is tackling – including through proper recognition and remuneration.

Amplifying youth voice

It is vital that young people are given a seat at the table when issues that affect their lives and futures are discussed - from shaping services, to influencing business leaders, to informing policy. This work requires systems and processes to be reshaped, to make space and time for young people, and share decision-making power.

Our role

Developing future environmental leaders

This year, 76 young people graduated from the first cohort of the Youth Leadership Programme – our partnership with Groundwork London. The programme aims to build leadership skills, engage young people in local environmental issues, and inspire social action. Colleagues from Berkeley Group have volunteered on the programme, sharing their knowledge, working with Groundwork London to shape the course curriculum and hosting site visits for the participants.

Investing in young people's progression

We actively seek partnerships with organisations that put young people at the heart of their work. For many of our partners, this means supporting former participants to progress into paid roles within their organisations. There are now nine former participants on the coaching staff of the Super 1s programme, and 70% of staff working on Street Elite have come through the programme themselves.

Involving young people in our own decision-making

Our work to involve young people in our grant-making has evolved this year. We worked with young people from the St Basils Youth Voice programme to develop and design Year 3 of our Resilience Fund. The young people advised on the fund's focus and criteria, and sat on the assessment panel to help make the final funding recommendations.

Our charity partners
Strategic Partners
Groundwork London
Development Fund
St Basils Youth Voice

<sup>1</sup> https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2024/apr/28/uk-charities-hiring-staff-with-privilege-not-potential-report-author-warns

**Groundwork London** works with young people to understand what they care about, and help them channel their passion into meaningful action in their local communities. Through our partnership, they are delivering a new Youth Leadership Programme, which aims to empower young people to take action on the environment.

The programme is delivered in collaboration with a network of colleges and youth centres, and is focused on developing a new generation of diverse young leaders. In addition, the partnership offers the young people opportunities to engage with a range of professionals and explore the career opportunities available to them.

**‘This project has helped me develop key skills such as teamwork, and expanded my knowledge on the environment’**

**Alice**  
Youth Leadership participant



**94%**  
of the participants from the first year reported improved awareness of local green spaces near their homes

“ Since January 2024, 16 innovative and enthusiastic young people from local sixth forms at City of Westminster College and University of Westminster have been on the programme. It has been amazing to be a part of their journey on the Youth Board and a true pleasure to work with this group of fantastic students. ”

**Liza Smith**  
Employment & Skills Manager Berkeley St Edward

**Driving social action**

In 2023, 76 young people from across London took part in the Youth Leadership Programme, with cohorts located in Hammersmith and Fulham, Barnet and Enfield. Initial feedback from the first year of the project indicated that:

- 85% of participants had increased soft skills and leadership skills
- 86% had increased employability skills
- 76% had improved wellbeing

As part of the 14-week long Youth Leadership Programme, participants use social action to improve the local environment and their own lives.

Cymeon took part in the programme. For their social action project, his group planned and built a composting area at the Masbro centre where local residents can compost food and help create nutrient-rich soil for the gardens. He comments: "I found this project inspiring and it's made me want to look after my community more. I hope this composting area will help people do the same for others."

**Embedding lived experience in new developments**

This year also included the delivery of a bespoke cohort in partnership with Berkeley St Edward, delivered by Groundwork London in Westminster. The young people were recruited directly by Berkeley St Edward and formed a Youth Board for the West End Gate development. Alongside the standard programme content, these young people learned about careers in the built environment and were able to access work experience opportunities with the business.

Our partnership with **Lord's Taverners** has been going strong since 2013. It delivers Super 1s, a cricket programme for disabled young people that is now reaching over 1,800 young people nationally every year.

As well as giving disabled young people the chance to train and play competitive cricket, Super 1s is helping participants gain a much broader set of life skills. Most recently, we've been working with Lord's Taverners and the Berkeley business to provide employability support for older participants getting ready for the world of work.

The Super 1s coaching staff now includes nine former programme participants – like James, whose story you can read here.

‘It’s helped my **confidence**, which has taken me to my first working opportunity’

#### James

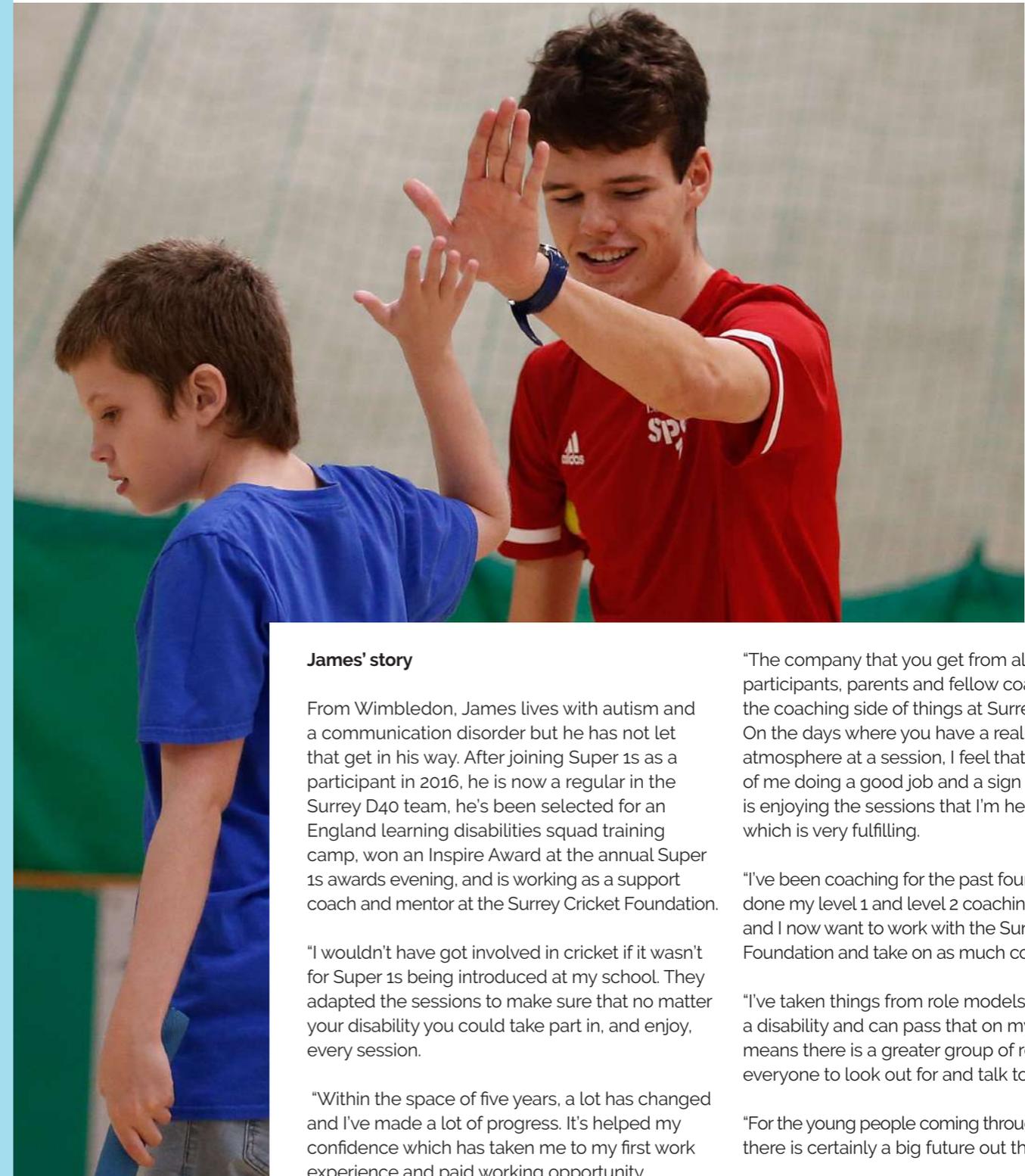
Former Super 1s participant, Support Coach and Mentor



**LORD'S TAVERNERS**  
Empowering young people through cricket



Watch James' story



#### James' story

From Wimbledon, James lives with autism and a communication disorder but he has not let that get in his way. After joining Super 1s as a participant in 2016, he is now a regular in the Surrey D40 team, he's been selected for an England learning disabilities squad training camp, won an Inspire Award at the annual Super 1s awards evening, and is working as a support coach and mentor at the Surrey Cricket Foundation.

"I wouldn't have got involved in cricket if it wasn't for Super 1s being introduced at my school. They adapted the sessions to make sure that no matter your disability you could take part in, and enjoy, every session.

"Within the space of five years, a lot has changed and I've made a lot of progress. It's helped my confidence which has taken me to my first work experience and paid working opportunity.

"The company that you get from all the participants, parents and fellow coaches through the coaching side of things at Surrey is brilliant. On the days where you have a really good atmosphere at a session, I feel that's a reflection of me doing a good job and a sign that everyone is enjoying the sessions that I'm helping to run, which is very fulfilling.

"I've been coaching for the past four years, I've done my level 1 and level 2 coaching courses and I now want to work with the Surrey Cricket Foundation and take on as much coaching as I can.

"I've taken things from role models who live with a disability and can pass that on myself. This means there is a greater group of role models for everyone to look out for and talk to.

"For the young people coming through Super 1s now, there is certainly a big future out there for them."

**Tamzin Reynolds-Rosser, National Youth Engagement Manager at St Basils, talks about the different aspects of the Youth Voice programme.**

The St Basils Youth Voice initiative, jointly funded by Berkeley Foundation and LandAid, seeks to empower young people to develop confidence, communication, and leadership skills to influence decision making policy, both locally and nationally.

Our focus has been on strengthening the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). This group of fifteen diverse young people with lived experience of homelessness are passionate about improving services.

Their experience with a four-day residential in the Lake District to focus on confidence and team building, creating a stronger leadership team.

This year, the YAB delivered an online seminar for Berkeley staff to talk about the realities of homelessness and the challenges they face. Learning from our young people has been built into the Berkeley Foundation's Resilience Fund, where members of the YAB assisted in shortlisting nominations, and Youth Ambassadors joined the grants panel.

A podcast series, designed and produced by the YAB, has also been released to share their experiences more widely and give people a better understanding of homelessness.

One of the St Basils youth ambassadors, Abbey, described the impact of the Youth Voice programme:

"Being a youth ambassador has really helped me grow as a person and helped me find who I am and what I want to achieve in life. I guess to really explain the impact this role has had; before, I didn't really have much hope for life and was just surviving most days, whereas now I feel like I'm living again. I have a purpose and am constantly challenging myself and surprising myself with what I am achieving. The fact I know that the work that's done helps others makes it even more rewarding. I've already learnt so much and can't wait to learn more."



Young people from Youth Voice recorded a film for World Homelessness Day, which was shared at a webinar for Berkeley Group colleagues.



You can watch it here: 

**St Basils** is the leading youth homelessness charity in the West Midlands. Its Youth Voice programme provides a platform for young people who have experienced homelessness to share their lived experience to bring about change to homelessness systems and services.

As part of our partnership with St Basils, we invited young people from Youth Voice to be part of our Resilience Fund. They helped to develop the criteria for the third year of the funding programme, and have been part of the assessment process and the final grants panel.

**‘Being a youth ambassador has really helped me grow as a person and helped me find who I am and what I want to achieve in life’**

**Abbey**  
St Basils Youth Ambassador





Salaam Peace works with young people in East London

Impact goal

5

# A resilient voluntary sector

### Our investment in 2023/24

# £ 167,000

We invested £167,000 in 2023/24 to help voluntary organisations build strength and resilience.

### Our impact in 2023/24

# 20

We supported 20 Resilience Fund partners during 2023/24.



### Our charity partners

- Resilience Fund
- Ambition Aspire Achieve
- Art Against Knives
- BelEve
- Berkshire Youth
- Breadwinners Foundation
- Bromley Experts by Experience
- Circle Collective
- High Trees Community Development
- Khulisa
- Newham All Star Sports Academy
- Reaching Higher
- Salaam Peace
- Sister System
- Small Green Shoots
- Spiral Skills CIC
- Success Club
- Sunbeams London
- The Boury Academy
- Women into Construction
- Youth Realities

## Understanding the need

### Building financial resilience

The resilience of the voluntary sector has been continuously tested over recent years, with the pandemic, economic shocks and cost of living crisis adding more strain to an already overstretched sector. Generating income and finding financial stability is one of the three top challenges for 58% of charity leaders.<sup>1</sup> Rising energy prices, higher rents and salaries mean that many charities are now struggling to cover their core costs.

### Meeting the challenge of rising need

Many of our charity partners are reporting that demand for their services is higher than ever. This is particularly true of those working on issues facing the very poorest in society, such as hunger and homelessness. Tenacity and creativity are needed to make sure resources are being used as effectively as possible.

### Supporting voluntary sector workers

A study by Pro Bono Economics and Nottingham Trent University shows that more than half (54%) of charities have vacancies and 83% of these organisations are finding it difficult to recruit as they try to meet rising need.<sup>2</sup> In this context, voluntary sector leaders and staff are often working under immense pressure – ultimately taking a toll on physical and mental health.

## Our role

### Building a stronger voluntary sector

This year we recruited another 10 partners through the second year of our Resilience Fund programme. Across the first two cohorts, our partners continued to report progress in building their organisational resilience, including financial growth, staff upskilling and improved governance.

### Creating a culture of learning and support

We delivered three learning events for our Resilience Fund partners this year, including a specialist session on financial resilience for small charities. 86% of partners feel the learning programme has matched their expectations. Participants also commented on the value of networking with other organisations and gaining an understanding of the approaches that others are taking.

### Adding value through unrestricted funding

There is growing interest among funders in supporting charity capacity and resilience, and increasingly, funders are giving core and unrestricted funding, rather than funding specific projects and programmes. This gives charities more flexibility to allocate their resources based on changing needs and pressures. This year, 51% of our total funding was either unrestricted or went towards supporting charities' core costs.

“ It has been a real benefit and pleasure to be part of the Berkeley programme. The focus on resilience without all the 'bells & whistles' of a project grant is a joy for small to medium charities, allowing us to focus on our core missions. ”

Year 1 Resilience Fund Partner

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-research/charity\\_landscape\\_report\\_2022.pdf](https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-research/charity_landscape_report_2022.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> <https://fundraising.co.uk/2023/03/30/charity-recruitment-crisis-taking-its-toll-study-shows/>

## Building voluntary sector resilience

Launched in 2021, our Resilience Fund represents a £900,000 investment in strengthening the voluntary sector, over four years. The fund aims to give small-to-medium sized charities and CICs the time, space and resources to build their resilience, so that they can be around to support young people and their communities for many years to come.

In the first year of the fund, ten organisations received grants of up to £30,000 each over two years. These organisational development grants were offered alongside a wraparound learning programme, facilitated by our learning partner Social Innovation Exchange (SIX), which brought partners together to share experiences and learn from each other.

As their two-year journey draws to a close, we have been looking back at the impact the Resilience Fund has had for our first ten partner organisations, and what we have learned along the way.

### Highlights from our first cohort

**£298,639**

total funding awarded

**70%**

of funded organisations had an annual income below £500,000

**90%**

average improvement in effective leadership

**31%**

average increase in financial sustainability

**44%**

average increase in ability to plan strategically

**100%**

of partners rated our partnership approach as 'excellent'



Small Green Shoots, Year 1 Resilience Fund Partner

## Key learnings

### Organisational resilience is often a complex journey

Partners began the learning programme at different stages in their organisational resilience journeys but a common thread was the complex intersection between personal, organisational and systemic resilience. Among the group, there were shared personal experiences, shared organisational and leadership challenges, and a shared belief in youth work as a foundation for a stronger society.

Organisations in the programme experienced a range of setbacks, both within their organisations and imposed by the challenging operating environment. We have strived to celebrate progress in any shape and form, while acknowledging that resilience is a long-term, complex journey.

### Creating an open and trusting space for our partners to come together is invaluable

Through the learning programme, we formed a community of support among organisations working in similar and complimentary ways. We've witnessed partners sharing learning, resources, solutions and identifying areas for collaboration. We are learning that resilience requires patience, peer support and a strong sense of community, as well as a stronger supporting ecosystem for voluntary sector organisations.

Right at the beginning of the programme, we talked about creating a 'brave space' for people to share their journeys. This was made possible by our approach to building open and trusting relationships with our partners. We co-created this space with our partners and SIX, and focused on the opportunities it provided, rather than the many challenges our partners faced.

One participant said: "The facilitated sessions allowed for reflection, shared experience and honesty in a safe, non-judgemental space."

### Grant-making is more than money

We have seen attitudinal and behavioural changes in participants since the start of the programme. To begin with, there was a sense of stress, pressure, competition and fatigue among our charity partners but over the course of the programme, we've seen participants show support, encouragement and empathy towards each other.

By bringing organisations together for meaningful discussion, we believe funders can directly challenge the stress and pressure facing the voluntary sector. Our partners valued the time and space they were able to tap into for reflection, problem sharing, listening, understanding and supporting each other.

One participant reflected: "It was refreshing to hear we all face the same challenges... it was also a great validation for myself and the work I do."

**What does success look like?**

When we set out on this journey to support charities to become more resilient, defining success was a challenge – what makes an organisation more resilient? We now know that resilience can look very different for everyone but each and every one of our Resilience Fund partners have been able to demonstrate tangible progress – from a 43% growth in sales income to new and improved governance models.

Voluntary sector organisations are operating in a challenging environment, so it's important that we as funders do what we can to help create the conditions for a thriving sector. We believe that supporting charities to build resilience and offering a more dynamic learning and evaluation process is one way to achieve this.



Art Against Knives, Year 1 Resilience Fund Partner

“ It has been a real benefit and pleasure to be part of the Berkeley programme. The focus on resilience without all the 'bells & whistles' of a project grant is a joy for small to medium charities, allowing us to focus on our core missions. ”

**Anonymous**  
Year 1 Resilience Fund Partner

“ The Berkeley team have been really proactive - they have met us in person, involved us in additional work e.g. youth panel opportunities and directed us to people that have helped us and will help us improve our organisational resilience. Communication is regular, but not pushy, and the monitoring requirements are reasonable given the length of funding period and amount of funding. ”

**Anonymous**  
Year 1 Resilience Fund Partner

“ With a solid business plan, organisational and financial strategy in place as well as an attractive and comprehensive website, I feel more secure and confident in the charity's ability to continue providing its unique services to the community, especially in light of the cost-of-living crisis and the rise in young people's mental health issues. With increased organisational resilience, we can focus on the needs of our users and the quality of our services, which is ultimately our utmost priority. ”

**Ruchi Ostreicher**  
Director of Sunbeams  
Year 2 Resilience Fund Partner



Sunbeams

**Berkshire Youth – a case study**

Reading-based charity Berkshire Youth has been supported to future-proof its organisation thanks to a £30,000 Resilience Fund grant.

Berkshire Youth delivers youth programmes and supports young people. Its flagship youth clubs offer a safe space for local young people to have fun, make friends and learn new skills.

Our funding has allowed Berkshire Youth to overhaul its governance and leadership structure, and employ a new Director of Youth Work to focus on championing youth work and youth workers in the county. The changes mean that Berkshire Youth is now well-placed to grow and evolve in response to the needs of young people in Berkshire.



Berkshire Youth, Resilience Fund Year 1 Partner

“ The funding from Berkeley Foundation was revolutionary for Berkshire Youth in addressing our organisation's resilience. The funding created the capacity and the focus to make Berkshire Youth future proof. With new trustees, a re-ignited passion and commitment from existing trustees we really have had the opportunity to create meaningful and lasting change. ”

**Sarah Emery**  
CEO at Berkshire Youth

**£30,000**  
Resilience Fund grants

Based in South London, **Reaching Higher** was set up as a response to challenges within its local community, where many young people lack role models and are at risk of exclusion, gang involvement or face other barriers. 20% of the young people Reaching Higher works with are within the care system.

We are working with Reaching Higher as part of the second cohort of our Resilience Fund. Our grant will help the charity appoint an Executive Director, and build up its leadership team in a sustainable and values-driven way.

# ‘We have been able to offer more opportunities for young people to shape the charity’s direction’

**Jordan Ignatius**  
Managing Director, Reaching Higher



### The importance of building resilience

Reaching Higher’s mission is to challenge young people to be leaders of their own lives within their place of influence. It adopts an asset-based approach, helping young people discover the transferable skills they have developed as a result of their lived experience. Reaching Higher has been led by its founder who works in a voluntary capacity, but recognised the need to strengthen its leadership team to be able to continue growing delivery. It applied to the Resilience Fund as it was looking to recruit an Executive Director to help strengthen its operations.

The added capacity has also released Reaching Higher’s Managing Director, Jordan Ignatius, to focus his time on strategic growth.

### Jordan describes the impact of our partnership:

“Over the past year Reaching Higher’s income has grown by 22% including several new multi-year grants. We have negotiated additional contract income from partner schools and statutory service

providers, and begun developing paid training packages which are already in demand from other youth organisations. We also launched a youth-led café and initiated a pilot research project in partnership with Croydon Council.

“With the support of the Berkeley Foundation, Reaching Higher has strengthened its financial governance processes in readiness for formal audit as our income continues to grow. We have established new referral partnerships and created three new staff roles in addition to the Executive Director, and we have also been able to offer more opportunities for young people to shape the charity’s direction.

“In the coming year we are looking forward to consolidating the high quality of our services for young people and scaling our impact through new partnerships.”

# Thank you

On maternity leave during the first part of this year, I was reminded in a very personal way of the importance of community. As a new mum, I drew on local baby groups to meet other parents, learned to rely on nearby friends and neighbours, and got to know what was happening in the cafes and community centres on my doorstep. This sense of connection turned what could have been a lonely period of my life, into a joyful one.

At the Berkeley Foundation, we have the privilege of working with a fantastic group of charities, all of whom put community and connection at the heart of their vital frontline services. At its best, the voluntary sector has an amazing ability to create safe spaces and develop trusted relationships, to bring people together and help us all feel less alone.

I'd like to thank our charity partners for their passion and commitment to this work, often in the face of huge external challenges. It remains an inspiration to work with you, and the young people you support, to achieve our shared goals.

I'd also like to thank the Berkeley Group and its staff for their unwavering support. The fundraising, donations and volunteering efforts of our Berkeley colleagues enable us to make a real difference in our local communities, and add value to our charity partnerships in a whole range of ways. A special thank you goes to our network of Foundation Champions, who drive this work across Berkeley's local sites and offices, and

all the companies within Berkeley's supply chain that have supported the Foundation this year.

Finally, a huge thank you to the fantastic Berkeley Foundation team and Board of Trustees – in particular Clare Maddison, for leading the team as Interim Head of Foundation during my maternity leave. I am looking forward to working with all of you as we deepen our impact in the years to come.

**Sally Dickinson**  
Head of the Berkeley Foundation



## Acknowledgements

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### St Joseph

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A team from St George volunteering at Vauxhall City Farm



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