

Inclusive Economy & Jobs Service Annual Report 2022-23

Presentation to the Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny
Committee

12th September 2023



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Outline

1. Islington's Economic Context
2. Community Wealth Building Strategy for an Inclusive Economy & Good Quality Employment
3. Economic Wellbeing
 - a) Skills
 - b) Employment
4. Supporting Young People
5. Business Support and Development
 - a) Town Centres, High Streets and Markets
 - b) Nags Head
 - c) Finsbury Park
 - d) Archway
 - e) Chapel Market



Outline

- f) Clerkenwell and Bunhill
- g) Caledonian Road
- h) People Friendly Streets
- i) Inclusive Business Growth

- 6. Growth Sectors
- 7. Collaborating with Anchor Institutions in Islington
- 8. Building and Inclusive Social and Economic Infrastructure
- 9. Embedding Net Zero
- 10. Challenging Inequalities in Employment and Business



1. Islington's Economic Context



A challenging period for Islington residents

- Food, energy, interest rates, and rents have risen above wages and benefits, hitting poorer residents and local businesses hard.
- Higher rates of unemployment in Islington than in London and the UK
- Fewer women in employment in Islington than in 2022
- Higher levels of personal debt than in London as a whole
- Difficulties finding qualified staff due to Brexit, hybrid working
- Economic outlook is challenging across London with low growth in 2023 and declining household incomes.



With some positives...

- A halving in the percentage of Islington's workers earning less than the living wage compared to 10 years ago (7.2% now)
- More people from ethnic minorities active in the workforce
- An increasing number of businesses registered in Islington
- A rise in the number of businesses offering high quality employment



2. Community Wealth Building Strategy



Community Wealth Building – people at the heart of economic development

Building economic resilience and shared prosperity through Community Wealth Building is key to the Council's objectives to tackle inequality and improve life chances, and a key part of delivering the Council's ambition for 2030 to **create a more equal Islington where everyone can thrive**.

That means working with residents, communities and businesses to tackle economic inequality and create an economy that works for everyone. The council and anchor institutions are crucial economic agents, supporting local people with our collective employment and purchasing power, and Islington's physical asset base.

The council's strategic plan, **Islington Together 2030 Plan**, outlines how we will deliver on our ambition and five key missions

- Child-friendly Islington
- Fairer Together
- A safe place to call home
- Community Wealth Building
- Greener, healthier Islington



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Vision & Objectives



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3. Economic Wellbeing



Income Maximisation

Over the past year we have:

- Delivered three successful Pension Credit take-up campaigns.
- 506 more pensioners are now claiming Pension Credit with an annual value of 1.61 million.
- As well as Pension Credit, Imax helped other residents to claim benefits, in the first-year to the campaign securing £3.48m. The lifetime value of the campaigns is £15.56m.
- In 22/23 Imax increased Islington resident's income by £5.74m by helping resident's claim additional benefits.
- £ 84,047.19 worth of childcare bursaries were allocated in 2022/23. There were 101 claims for childcare bursary, 73 of which were unique. The childcare bursary supported 39 parents into work and a further 21 parents that received money to sustain employment.



Islington Childcare Bursary – Helping Parents Get Back to Work

The Islington Childcare Bursary scheme helps parents on low incomes to move into or remain in work by providing short term financial support towards the cost of childcare, which can be a significant barrier to employment. Here a parent explains how it helped:

Quote from a childcare bursary beneficiary

“Getting the childcare bursary, which was processed at quite short notice, allowed me to continue work experience for my university course. I want to become a qualified early educator., I am currently a full-time student at London Metropolitan, studying Early Childhood Studies. As part of my course, I must complete 260 hours in a childcare setting. My daughter is too young to be eligible for 30 hours at nursery, and whilst the free hours have allowed me to do the course, I wouldn't be able to do the work experience, and I have struggled to find appropriate part time work. In fact, due to my daughter having the same days at nursery as I have for university, I am limited to days I can work and already miss a bit of learning time due to drop off and pick up, I have asked the nursery if I could pay for breakfast club, but they explained they do not do that. I have applied for many jobs via Indeed, but I want to find work in a nursery as it will benefit my studying, I have finally been offered a job and they want an early start. Without help from the bursary, I would have missed this opportunity as well. Now I can continue my course and earn a bit of extra cash to get us a better Christmas”



Looking Ahead – 2023/24

- Recent changes to how Universal Credit (UC) and childcare interact, means that we may find fewer parents need our childcare bursary support to enter work.
- It is too early to be sure of the impact, but we will continue to support parents with holiday childcare, or with support for exams and other key Further Education or Higher Education activities.
- We are also working with local partners to ensure they support their clients to take up the improved UC offer
- In the past, the iWork discretionary bursary went beyond childcare to provide other key financial support around entering work including buying tools and paying for travel cards. In 23/34 we have met this need using the ESF programme funded bursary, this is now ended and we anticipate that this kind of support will now be increasingly sought after as the cost-of-living crisis continues to impact
- Our income maximisation service, Imax is helping Islington residents claim additional benefits and is aiming to increase their income by £6m by the end of the 23/24 financial year
- Imax plans to start a fourth pension credit campaign and starting targeted work with disabled people to ensure they're getting their full entitlements.
- Imax is about to launch a new benefit calculator that both staff and residents can use.



3a. Skills

Creating clear skills pathways into work and supporting those already in work to upskill to find better and more secure jobs



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Adult & Community Learning

Over the past year we have:

- **Enrolled 1,788 learners on free courses** - the highest enrolment since 2016/17. **Key cohorts** include residents with disabilities and learning difficulties, parents of young children; people from black, Asian and Minority ethnic backgrounds and older residents.
- **Provision** included **English for Speakers of Languages**, Maths, English, vocational, free courses for jobs L3 and digital skills.
- **Worked in collaboration with key community partners**, such as the local jobcentres, Hillside Clubhouse and Light Project Pro International to develop free courses for priority groups.
- **Multiply funding** used to deliver budgeting sessions, Maths awareness workshops, Maths awareness for ESOL and vocational courses in primary schools, warm spaces and community centres across the borough. Exceeded the Year 1 target of 77 enrolments and encouraged by the GLA to bid for growth in Year 2.
- Hosted the **annual celebration of achievement** event.



Adult & Community Learning Priorities 2023/24

- To deliver the ACL reorganisation, resulting in a better performing service that is aligned to CWB priorities and has a more robust performance culture.
- To showcase the strengths of the service if and when Ofsted announce an inspection and secure at least a 'Good' judgement for each area.
- To engage with and deliver learning to 1800 local people.
- To develop the curriculum offer with CWB priorities, resulting in courses that meet local needs.



3b. Employment

Reaching residents most in need of employment support and tackling precarious employment and lack of progression



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iWork Adult Employment Support

Over the past year we have:

- Provided the right support to get **3,013** people into work as part of the Islington working partnership.
- Worked collaboratively with youth progression and ACL to support successful delivery of the **ESF funded 'Connected communities programme'**
- Worked with anchor institutions in the Health and Social Care sector to support with workforce planning and the benefits of working with local agencies to reach local candidates. 40 local people placed into employment in the sector.
- Strengthened our partnership with council contractors to maximise the impact of section 106 local labour clauses to focus on good work and training opportunities. 32 local people placed into employment in the construction sector including 35 women engaged in forming a talent pool for local construction apprenticeships.



iWork Adult Employment Support

Over the past year we have:

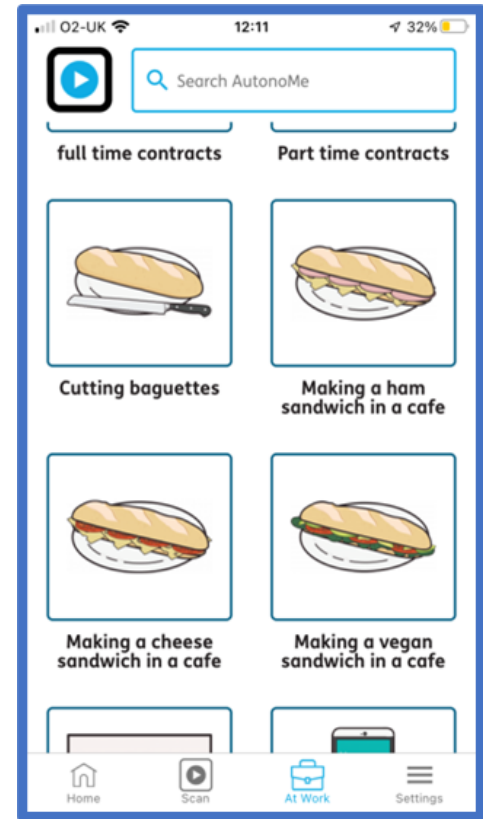
- Worked closely with Matrix, the council's recruitment agency, to support local residents into good jobs. 40 residents joined the council from underrepresented communities, helping to make the council more representative of our diverse local community .
- Integrated the Islington Supported Employment Team (ISET) into the directorate. The team have benefited from our sector brokerage teams and also our local employment links via the Local economy officers. As a result we now have residents with a global learning disability working at London Bridge station via an introduction to Network Rail (Finsbury Park) and with a local painting and decorating agency
- ISET have also built their own relationship with the Almeida Theatre who are offering one client a three month work experience placement and employed another resident who has been with them for almost a year.
- The ISET team have benefited from a new partnership with Autonomie who make teaching videos , enabling access via a QR code scanned on their phones which can be used repeatedly



Autonome and Almeida in Partnership - Facilitating Employment Opportunities



- Autonome is an innovative approach to supporting people learning disabilities and autism to develop skills for independent living and employment. They have many off the shelf videos that can be played over and over, teaching every day skills
- In addition to the video library Autonome have created specific videos for our clients who are close to employment , focusing on any small task that is proving a challenge . Our clients gain access to the videos via a QR code they can scan on their phones. They use actors who carry out the task but in the actual workplace that our resident is based.
- Jermaine asked for help to ensure he was cutting the sandwiches properly – and with the help of a bespoke video, he is about to increase his hours and take on new tasks as Almeida are so happy with his work



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Provide a strategic sectoral approach to securing employment for Islington residents with a focus on Construction, Health and Social Care, the public sector and via the LIFT Programme (Tech, Digital, Life Sciences and Creative Production).
- Support at least **1,500** unemployed Islington residents into employment and increase the proportion of residents from black and minority ethnic communities into work by 60% and provide targeted support for those with a disability and long term health condition.
- Identify new approaches to ensure we improve our impact on local parents, and particularly lone parents
- New **UKSPF employment and skills funding (£400K over 15 months)** to support disabled residents into work, promote more anchor institutions apprenticeships and residents to become self-employed or form co-operatives
- Use leverage with council contracted suppliers so that they provide employment for local people by working closely with council commissioners.
- Support the development of a refugee programme to understand our local growth sectors and advocate with local employers, including an NHS specific volunteering programme.
- Work more closely with our Youth Hubs and World of Work programmes to ensure that we are reaching younger residents and supporting positive career choices .



4. Youth Employment and Progression



Supporting Young People

Over the past year we have:

- 17 paid summer work placements for young people at risk of serious youth violence through the Your Choice programme pilot, with four going on to secure permanent roles with their host employer.
- Soft launch of the youth employment hub at West Library which has now hosted a series of events including; apprenticeship awareness sessions for young people, parents and carers, employability workshops, maths and English sessions and one to one careers guidance.
- Brokered 68 World of work activities, supported by 147 volunteers which reached 6570 young people in primary, secondary and further education.
- Successful delivery of a pilot programme with NHS England to raise the profile of Health and Social Care careers for care experienced young people. Supported 17 looked after children, of which 6 were current or former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, with one-to-one employability support, NHS careers insights, coaching and mentoring by NHS professionals, leading to an expanded programme this year.



City of London Academy – Highbury Grove Careers Insight Session

- City of London Academy Highbury Grove ran two STEM careers Insight sessions for their Year 7's and 8's which took place on Tuesday 16 and Tuesday 23 November.
- Students heard from 24 volunteers brokered by the Council's World of Work team covering professional services such as financial management, law, engineering, sports science and more.
- The event contributed to the school meeting two Gatsby Benchmarks (a measure of careers education in schools) for (1) *learning from careers and labour market information* and (2) *encounters with employers*.
- Students also developed essential skills in listening, speaking and aiming high

"I've really enjoyed hearing people talk about their lifestyles and how they got into their job. It is very interesting to hear and it's giving me a lot to think about." - Danette Yr.8

- Solicitor Ferdisha Snagg was one of the many employers who gave an overview of their career path to date and answered student questions. She was impressed by the wide range of engaging questions from the students

It is also important for me to be here today as it showcases that professional roles like mine are accessible." - Ferdisha, Financial Services Regulation Lawyer at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Official launch of the Youth Employment Hubs in Caledonian and Finsbury Park wards, to include a programme of education, employment and skills activities for Islington's young people.
- Extend work with council suppliers, anchor institutions and other local businesses to expand world of work activities, create more work experience placements and develop pathways into early careers opportunities.
- Host / co-host regular networking and progression events with local partners to promote growth sectors and careers.



5. Inclusive Businesses Inclusive Places



5a. Inclusive Local Economies

Town Centres, High Streets & Markets



Town Centres, High Streets and Markets to March 2023

Over the past year we have:

- Supported over 1,000 small businesses in Islington to survive and thrive, including through signposting, troubleshooting, referrals, and on-the-ground support.
- Delivered a grant to over 100 of Islington's smallest independent hospitality business to help with the cost of energy in the winter months.
- Successfully bid for 'Creative Enterprise Zone' accreditation for Archway, unlocking more opportunities to support grassroots creatives and young people in the area.
- Commissioned an 'Inclusive Markets' review to ensure our markets remain welcoming and affordable places for a diverse range of customers and traders.
- Engaged with hundreds of businesses in areas impacted by low-traffic schemes or public realm improvement schemes.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- A first visit to Islington from the national 'Small Business Saturday' tour (taking place in Nov 2023).
- Increasing the number of businesses participating in circular economy practices via grants and other local initiatives.
- Launching our first series of 'Youth Markets' and 'Black-Owned Business Markets', as part of a wider 'Inclusive Markets Plan' designed to make our markets more welcoming and inclusive.
- Ensuring an inclusive festive events programme that factors in the cost-of-living crisis and climate crisis (free food/refreshments for attendees and all plastic free events).
- Launching and delivering a successful year one for Islington's new Creative Enterprise Zone in Archway.
- Developing a new business support programme, including discounted Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) membership and bespoke business advice service, focusing on access for priority groups.



b. Nag's Head



Nags Head

- One-to-one support to businesses, including referrals for grants and legal advice, help finding new premises, dealing with evictions and court summons, reviewing Valuation Office Agency assessments, tackling landlord problems.
- Worked with LBI Community Safety team to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and sign-up businesses to the Safe Haven scheme. Initiated a visit to the Halifax and an Environmental Visual Audit of the Morrisons delivery yard in Oct '22, following up on agreements with key stakeholders.
- Worked with the government's High Streets Task Force (HSTF) on town centre visioning, identifying actions to address the negative impacts of the busy road infrastructure, and scoping the opportunity for a local teenage market.
- Partnership between London Met University, Arsenal and Lavazza to launch the Learn to Dream mural aimed at inspiring younger people and encouraging them to pursue a better future, and ensured local businesses benefitted from the community event.
- TfL business engagement strategy for the installation of the C50 cycle route, carried out door to door visits of Parkhurst and Seven Sisters Road businesses along the route and overcame all obstacles identified – resulting in the scheme being generally well received.
- Supported businesses affected by the Hornsey Road burst mains pipe and several Holloway Road businesses flooded during the 17th August downpour.
- Facilitated the Nag's Head Town Centre Management Group and involvement in events such as the Christmas lights switch on event of 19 November '22 which brought together local community resources Streets Kitchen, Manor Gardens Welfare Trust, Holloway Neighbourhood Group and North Library.



Overcoming adversity and building capacity to support business resilience

- Following an early morning water main burst on 08 August 2022, promptly visited all the business properties affected, just south and east of the town centre, to assess and report on impact.
- Subsequently ensured all businesses received adequate attention and support from Thames Water, their loss adjusters Sedgewick, and works contractors as well as council services including Business Rates and Environmental Health - this included researching the ownership of a few seemingly vacant properties.
- Helped ensure businesses affected by the flooding were represented at the 15 Sept '22 Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting with Thames Water and then stayed connected with the businesses throughout the year, helping to deal with a variety of obstacles as they arose.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Maximise the potential of the C50 Cycleway for businesses on the route and the wider town centre by facilitating business engagement and comments before and during the consultation phase.
- Now that the upper floor (The Upper Place) of the Nag's Head Covered Market has opened, ensure that the whole market contributes positively to the community and any disruption to nearby residents is minimised.
- Secure social value benefits from the proposed Arsenal / Ashburton development at 45 Hornsey Rd & 252 Holloway Rd (and the railway arches and land in between) e.g. through having a say on the tenancies of at least some of the arches and keeping their rents below market rates.
- Facilitate vacant properties being brought back into use and to encourage developments such as the Marlborough Building and the Brownlow Developments properties of 409-415 Holloway Road to contribute positively to the local community.
- Build on the engagement with the High Streets Task Force to develop a prospectus for the town centre that summarises key ongoing and planned projects, highlights potential opportunities and can be used to help encourage a sense of ownership and develop a collective vision for the area.
- Support a pilot civic pride campaign in the town centre with a pre-assessment of current issues and a week of action in September, and link this with trial recycling from flats above shops along Seven Sisters Road.
- Continue to facilitate the Nag's Head Town Centre Management Group and support the set-up of a new traders associations in the area.



c. Finsbury Park



Finsbury Park

- Small Business Commissioner taken on a tour to visit and interview small businesses about their day to day challenges. High-profile visit raised the visibility of Finsbury Park and gave a platform for small businesses to share challenges on a national stage and to a government representative.
- Brokerage of local social value including supply chain opportunities for small businesses to supply the iWork team with items e.g., laptops, stationery and clothing for the Back to Work program, resulting in council spend being diverted to local businesses.
- Successfully encouraged Festival Republic to supply equipment and volunteers for Street Fest, a local event that supports the Street Homeless population.
- Created multiple employment and training opportunities for residents with local businesses in the catering and retail sectors. Additionally, jobs for residents were brokered with local stakeholders including Network Rail, TfL and Eurovia that saw local residents employed to work on C50 Cycle route business engagement and London Bridge Station.
- The first joint Traders Association Meeting in Finsbury Park was held between businesses from Fonthill Rd, Seven Sisters Rd, Stroud Green Rd, Blackstock Rd and Honsey Rd. This inaugural meeting strengthened the relationships between local groups, and kickstarted the process of establishing a joint vision for improving the appeal of the area for residents, businesses and visitors.
- During ongoing construction of the C50 cycle lane along Seven Sisters Rd, great effort has been taken to support businesses through this large infrastructure change. This has included facilitation of meetings, walkabouts and one to one engagements.
- The festive event held on 3rd December '22 was attended by more than 400 people as well as the Small Business Commissioner who switched the lights on. Local suppliers were used for catering and entertainment, which was free for attendees in acknowledgement of the cost of living crisis.



Joining up the dots between services - securing well paid jobs for our residents

- Local Economy officer work varies, covering a wide range interactions between many services in the support of businesses. One task is to work with transport operators to mitigate the impact of works on local businesses.
- In addition to businesses, residents are kept firmly in mind and if any opportunity arises from engaging with stakeholders or other council teams.
- One such opportunity arose during a meeting with TfL and its contractor Eurovia. The Finsbury Park LBI Officer was informed during a meeting about an upcoming opportunity to work with Eurovia on projects over the next 12 months and that ideally a local resident who knew the area was needed. Starting pay for this position was in the region of £30,000,
- It was a perfect opportunity for a collaboration between the Local Economies Team and Employer Engagement Team and so Eurovia were introduced to the employment team and directed to Islington's jobs portal for local residents.
- The Employer Engagement Officer worked closely with Eurovia to find a local resident who would fit the bill. The position was quickly filled, and the resident is enjoying their role and making a valuable contribution to the engagement processes.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Completion of the new Finsbury Park Tri-borough Accord. The accord is a joint working agreement between Islington, Hackney and Haringay councils that focuses on community safety/policing, waste management, public realm improvements and business support to ensure a joined-up approach across borough boundaries.
- Deliver businesses interventions e.g. social media training, visual merchandising, public realm improvements, and business support to help build the resilience of local businesses, helping them to adapt as the economic climate changes. .
- New program of engagement with the Affordable Workspaces in Finsbury Park to ensure they continue to build on local relationships to produce more job and training opportunities. This will include workshops, skills training, community outreach and a new comms campaign.
- Continue to host the quarterly Tri-borough Finsbury Park Town Centre Management Group Meeting.
- Building on the work with the five traders associations in Finsbury Park by encouraging more business to join the associations, more attendance at town centre meetings and build a joint business vision for the area e.g., encouraging the use local supply chains, more business-to-business work.
- Encouraging cycling groups and individuals to support businesses along the new C50 Cycle route to show that not all business comes from cars.
- Festive Light switch-on taking place Saturday 25th November.



d. Archway



Archway

- Awarded Creative Enterprise Zone status by The Mayor of London.
- Facilitated Bomb Arts Factory with London Living Wage accreditation and their hosting of a creative focused Employment Practitioners Network.
- Organised Archway's 'Greatest Christmas event' attended by approx. 2000 local residents & visitors across the day, promoting high street businesses with a treasure trail and Xmas shop window competition, whilst providing Market Trader Trainees with practical trading experience and mentoring in Archway Market.
- Organised several focused walkabouts of Archway; including a visit by Amy Lane, Night Czar for London to understand Archway's Night-time Economy and a GLA walkabout to meet local grassroots creative organisations to understand the issues they face.
- 'Mosaic to the Irish Community' delivered in partnership with Heritage colleagues and local schools – unveiled by Irish Ambassador to the UK & the Mayor of Islington, paying homage to the huge contributions of Irish people to life in Islington, and the reason for Navigator Square's name, whilst also proving a footfall attraction for the local economy.
- Secured £3500 in donations for the Archway Town Centre Group to assist businesses with bulk ordering, along with £5000 sponsorship of the Christmas event.



Archway becomes a Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ)

- Responding to the concerns of local creative businesses who said that they were suffering with lack of affordable workspace and ways to nourish young local creative talent, we led a multi-team bid, supported by a wide range of local stakeholders. The CEZ will deliver:
- A £70k Impact Grant with approx. £200k match from Islington Council - officer time, community infrastructure levy, S106, Archway animation funds & Sponsorship which will be used to support the delivery of:
 - -A dedicated Creative Enterprise Zone Manager for 2 years/3 years pro-rata.
 - -Community engagement to develop a creative strategy to take the zone forward.
 - -Mapping & feasibility of unused public assets, such as garage under crofts, for types of creative use.
 - -An events focused Co-operative Community Interest Company.
 - -Showcase activity through special events to highlight grassroots creatives.
 - -Training and workshops – encompassing mentoring, workshops and talks to support residents into local creative careers
 - -Creative Internships with 50% match towards three, three-month creative internships



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Revitalised Archway Town Centre Group, which includes a rotating chair, new business plan and more accessible meetings.
- Working with the Library Team on the Library Improvement Fund bid, to pilot a digital tech hub in Archway that can be used by residents and local organisations, including 3D printing, podcasting and design.
- Securing the removal of British Telecom boxes associated with anti-social behaviour so we can utilise the space for pop up street trading.
- Initiating a shared use electric car pilot for Archway businesses.
- Exploring a potential pilot for an urban growing project using an old unused subway.
- Delivering the Creative Enterprise Zone action plan including community engagement for co-design of the future of the Creative Enterprise Zone, recruiting a new officer dedicated to supporting the creative economy in Archway and scoping feasibility of Affordable Workspace within the CEZ boundaries.



e. Chapel Market



Chapel Market

- New Economics Foundation study commissioned and delivered to support development of a roadmap to more inclusive markets.
- Market Trader Support project delivered across 2022, which engaged and supported 133 traders/prospective traders.
- Several successful events delivered across 2022.
- Commencement of the Chapel Market public realm improvement project in May 2023.
- Delivery of several 'activation' activities to promote Chapel market and improve footfall during period of improvement works.
- Deployment of the Chapel Market brand identity across social media.
- Delivery of one of three planned market trader training programmes in conjunction with Adult Community Learning.

Young People Learning Food – “Know your Onions” in Chapel Market

- Chapel Market, like many traditional markets, suffers from a disconnection between the younger generation. The root cause is that traditional markets are not particularly relevant to them. This is visibly apparent in observing the average age of both customers and traders at the market. A key aim of our work is to build connections to the market with local young people and inspire those with entrepreneurial spirit to view the market as a place in which they belong and can develop their own business.
- A recent project that supported this aim took place this July, when Chapel Market hosted students from three local schools (The Bridge, Richard Cloudsley and Beacon High), participating in the 'Know Your Onions' programme (a food education project run by the charity ['School Food Matters'](#)). This was the first time the project operated in Islington.
- The purpose of the initiative was to teach secondary school children where their food comes from and connect them with the process that goes into food production from farm to fork.
- The students grew their own produce at a commercial garden run by the charity, harvesting their produce and selling it at a local market. The Market Development Officer provided support to the project, including equipment hire and professional guidance on subjects such as sales and visual merchandising techniques.
- The students thoroughly enjoyed their time at the market, developing self-confidence by experiencing a day in the life of an entrepreneur and developed a personal connection to the market.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Completion of the Chapel Market public realm improvement project in December 2023.
- Delivery of an art exhibition featuring portraits of local traders, hosted by Chapel Market gallery White Conduit Projects, to encourage footfall at the market.
- Hosting pop-up markets at Chapel Market following completion of the development works.
- Recruitment of new traders, focusing on finding traders from a range of backgrounds to complement the existing offer.
- Improving operational aspects across all Islington Markets to facilitate growth and retain new and existing traders.

f. Clerkenwell & Bunhill



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Clerkenwell & Bunhill

- **Hired an Islington resident on a project management apprenticeship:** on London Living Wage salary; facilitating training and qualifications; launching career and improving prospects for local person; strengthening local economy.
- **Multiple opportunities brokered for local businesses to deliver social value:** several employment opportunities identified and advertised via Islington Employment Service; >10 World of Work opportunities; business-to-business local procurement opportunities identified and realised; multiple LIFT and ISN referrals including 4x relationships brokered with architect firms for LIFT BBE apprenticeship programme; regular London Living Wage promotion and referrals.
- **Everyday business support:** assisted businesses with 121 support, including grants, business rates, licensing, triage of council queries etc, plus referrals: World of Work, ISN, employment services, LIFT, Safe Havens, Toilets for London; creating opportunities for local businesses to grow and thrive.
- **Whitecross Festive Event:** 400+ people in attendance; £5084 procured locally, and all stall holders also local – meaning more money staying in the local economy!
- 14 Clerkenwell businesses and six Bunhill businesses received energy relief grant; **£10,000 provided for local hospitality businesses to help with rising energy costs**
- Continue to **work with Central District Alliance (CDA) to improve local economy in Clerkenwell area:**
 - First **Islington Management Group** held Aug 23 – aim is to identify and deliver social value opportunities; harnessing CDA links with larger businesses in Clerkenwell to deliver such opportunities
 - **London Living Wage campaign** underway – aim is to promote to CDA members for these businesses to contribute to Islington's LLW goal to become 'living wage borough' by 2026
 - **SME engagement and events** - scheme to link local SMEs with larger businesses in the area to benefit from their skills & knowledge e.g., Google can provide digital skills courses, banks can provide financial advice specific to small businesses etc.
 - General support in Safe Havens and Toilets for London schemes



Islington's Businesses Deliver Social Value

A local **architect firm** is spending locally and providing social value for residents:

- Using locally-owned green grocers for everyday fruit & veg supplies for office and staff lunches, delivered by cargo bike
- Working with local migrant-owned coffee shop, which also trains and employs refugees, to buy their ground coffee supplies for the office. The coffee is roasted in an innovative low-energy roasting machine and is delivered in reusable hessian sacks and by cargo bike and on foot.

This coffee shop is also working with Islington's migrant team to connect to local refugee organisations re staff hire and they have applied for the Energising Small Business fund and joined Islington Sustainability Network.

In Clerkenwell and Bunhill other connections brokered include:

- Islington Employment Service to hire locally;
- LIFT Plan BBE apprenticeship programme to provide opportunities for local people entering the built environment industry
- World of Work programme to provide opportunities for work experience and educational engagement opportunities to inspire the next generation.
- **A new co-working space which aims to offer a vibrant co-working / social / health space for local people has:**
 - Identified 4 employment opportunities to recruit for locally; general manager, host, event manager, and wellness coach.
 - Have advertised for one of these via Islington Working Portal with plans for others in coming months
 - Are in talks with local fitness instructors/personal trainers to run classes and offer personalised fitness and health training for tenants of the space
 - They are committed to becoming a London Living Wage employer
 - They are talking to local suppliers to enhance their local spend i.e., procurement for everyday office supplies such as fruit, coffee, lunches etc.



Looking Ahead 2023/24



Social value event – Bunhill:

Event to engage with large businesses and corporates in Old St area to promote and broker local social impact opportunities

Opportunity to repeat in Clerkenwell



Whitecross Heritage project:

With help from local partners such as Soapbox, St. Luke's Community History Group, Finsbury Library, London Metropolitan Archives, British Library, and local artist, this project will enhance the history and heritage of Whitecross Market, with the aim of:

Enhancing sense of identity and ownership for residents

Attract more visitors

Encourage more dwell time for customers

Drive more custom for businesses and traders



Business support:

Support for businesses affected by low traffic schemes

Subsidised membership to **Federation of Small Businesses**

Circular Economy grant scheme to help businesses launch/enhance their zero-waste offering

Expansion of **Energising Small Business grants - helping** reduce energy consumption, improve environmental impact, and reduce running costs

Night-time Economy – investment to improve evening offer of local economy area, drive footfall, and increase custom for businesses



Shared Cargo Bike scheme

Rollout of promotional campaign to promote Islington's shared cargo bike scheme on Exmouth Market and 3 other locations across the borough.

Aim to increase awareness of cargo bikes and increase usage to help move towards Islington becoming a net-zero borough by 2030



g.Caledonian Road – “The Cally”



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Caledonian Road 'The Cally'



- Supported the growth of the Cally Traders' Association
 - Arranged banking facilities, governance, and branding/promotional materials
 - Organised networking events, a jubilee event, a trial market (September 2022), heritage walks and festive events in partnership with the Caledonian Traders' Association
- Shop local initiatives with 25 local businesses offering discounts throughout June and July 2022
- Assisted hundreds of businesses with 121 support, including on grants, business rates, food hygiene, energy costs and business training
- Delivered a 'Footways' digital map aimed at attracting people to the Cally high street via an appealing and accessible walking route
- Led the Future Neighbourhoods Strategy from inception to publication (November 2022) after being awarded 30k from the Greater London Authority. The strategy sets out actions and outcomes necessary to harness a green/sharing/circular economy in The Cally, including a food surplus café, tool sharing scheme and training for businesses
- Negotiated with the Barnsbury transformation team a series of 'on the ground' local economies initiatives, including all workers being provided with the local discount card. The developer has also been provided with a directory of local building suppliers and a trade mission is being set up to ensure maximum benefit for local businesses.



Helping Businesses Pay Their Energy Bills

- There has been an impactful business support offer in The Cally, to support our small and independent business community amidst a backdrop of rising energy prices, the cost-of-living crisis and other economic pressures
- Ten local businesses were supported through the £500 energy relief scheme, to help with rising energy costs. The quote below comes from a local café who received the grant:

I would like to thank you so much for all your help and support. Your commitment with the community is amazing. We feel someone there really cares about us and is trying their best to help and find the best way to improve the area - *Café Owner, Caledonian Road*



- Not only have businesses in The Cally been supported through grant provision, but tailored 1-2-1 support, too
- Cally's Local Economy Officer has worked closely with business owners to understand the economic challenges they are facing and identify routes forward together
- One business, for example, has been supported (through translation, signposting to free legal advice and regular check-ins) in a 5 month complaint process with their energy supplier, which has resulted in positive ombudsman involvement and authorisation to leave the energy contract early.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Shop local initiatives to be launched in September 2023, notably a Cally Loyalty Card and website.
- Quarterly networking events for Caledonian Trader's Association members from September 2023 onwards.
- Business engagement for the Cally Liveable Neighbourhood took place throughout July 2023. Cally Local Economies Officer will continue partnership work with People Friendly Streets to ensure businesses have a strong input into plans for improving the public realm and 'liveability' of Cally.
- AccessAble's report recommendations (July 2023) on improving accessibility in The Cally will be embedded into Liveable Neighbourhoods and Local Economies work.
- Work underway to deliver Future Neighbourhood projects, such as a food surplus café and a business-focussed tool/equipment sharing scheme. By 2024, we aim to see regular use of a sharing bank and food diverted from Chapel Market/local supermarkets to a surplus café.
- Deliver a green economy youth engagement programme (we have 16k development funding for this work from the Greater London Authority).
- Develop training offer on green economy for local businesses in the Cally around reducing waste and saving money.
- Set up a regular Cally Street Market at Freeling Street or other suitable location.
- Continue to support the Caledonian Traders' Association to sustain and grow and provide meaningful business support to local traders.
- Initiate project targeting high number of vacant properties on Cally Road.
- Continue to work closely with local housing developers to encourage local spend and identify social value opportunities.



h. People Friendly Streets



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Key Achievements to March 2023

- **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods** made permanent St Peters and Canonbury East November 2022, Canonbury West and Clerkenwell Green February 2023 with relevant business engagement taking place.
- School Streets underwent public consultation (Scared Heart primary school, Robert Blair Primary School, Highgate Hill) aided by Local Economies team.
- **Liveable Neighbourhoods** consultations Phase 1 completed: Cally, Mildmay and Barnsbury and Laycock. Phase 2 Mildmay co-design workshop and business engagement with businesses in and around Mildmay and neighbouring areas.
- An all-Islington exemption was granted to the Funeral Directors in December 2022, this grants access to all Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to support their vital work in the community.



Charlton Place

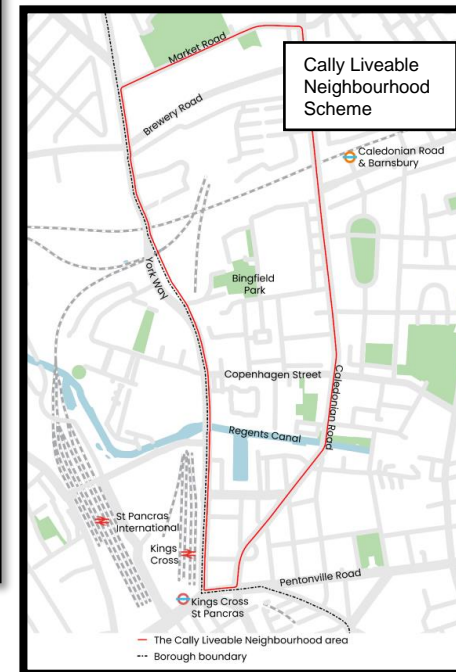
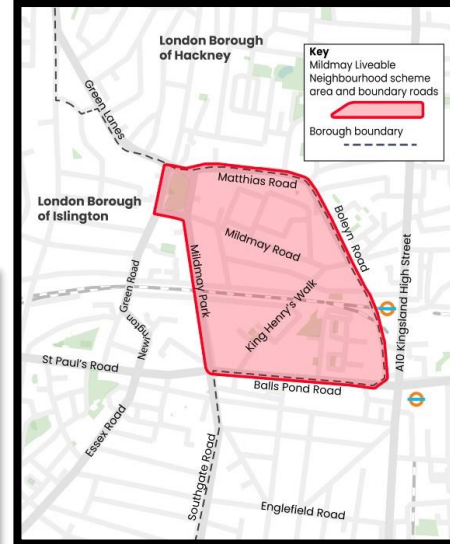
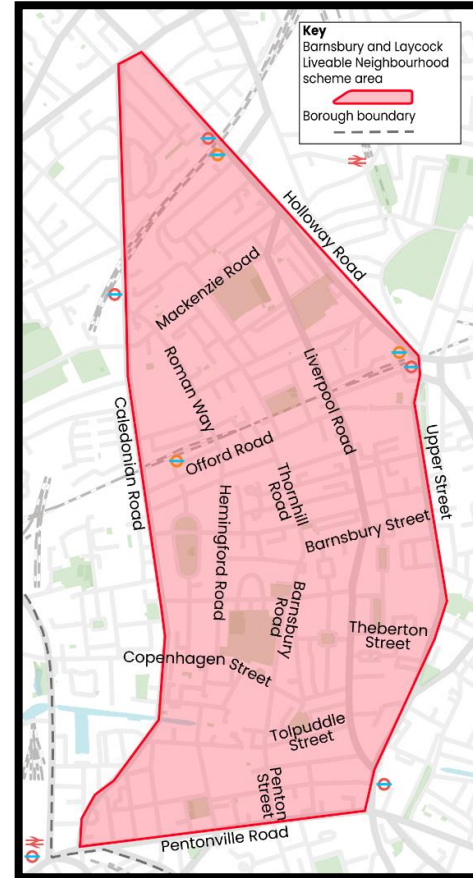
- Charlton Place is a sub-scheme in the St Peters Low Traffic Neighbourhood. The initial design/intention was to create a 24/7 traffic filter to stop traffic from entering and exiting the road. The Local Economies team worked closely with the businesses and market traders across Camden Passage and Charlton Place, meeting with every businesses to grant them the opportunity to feedback on the scheme.
- A 'local access only' zone has now been implemented which means that business deliveries can still take place whilst significantly reducing through-traffic to the area. The Local Economies team will continue to work with businesses in the area to develop plans to support the unique heritage and economy of the Passage.



Looking Ahead 2023/24

Liveable neighbourhoods business engagement

- **Cally** - winter 2023 Stage 3 public consultation and formal consultation on the final designs
- **Mildmay** - autumn 2023 Stage 3 public consultation and formal consultation on the final designs
- **Barnsbury and Laycock** - autumn 2023 Codesign workshops and business engagement with businesses



Inclusive Business Growth

Helping grow Islington's small and micro business community by connecting them to opportunities and supporting wider ownership through co-operatives and social enterprises

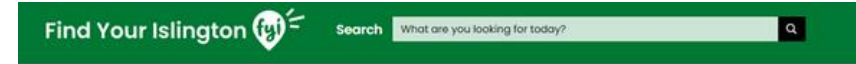
Inclusive Business Growth

- Cooperate Islington gave up to £10k in grants to 17 early-stage cooperatives in Islington, distributing a total of £67,286 in funding overall. Businesses also received a total 174 hours of expert business development support combined.
- Enhancing the online directory of the construction sector and related trades on 'Find Your Islington' to create a more user-friendly portal that will better assist buyers in the borough to meet Section 106 obligations and other social value commitments.
- Quarterly briefing provided to councillors outlining current business support available to help members to navigate enquiries from businesses and provide further options to signpost them onto.
- We secured £400k in funding to commission a Net Zero Carbon Business Accelerator Programme that supports diverse start-ups in the engineering, digital, built environment, and engagement fields to work on solutions that directly address Islington council's priority and respond to green skills shortage and sustainability issues in the borough



Business Support to Islington's Construction Industry

- Islington Council is redeveloping its online directory of the construction sector and related trades on 'Find Your Islington' to create a more user-friendly portal that will better assist buyers in the borough to meet Section 106 obligations and other social value commitments.
- Through improved access to additional commercial and ethical information on each business (e.g., contracting information, which organisations are accredited Living Wage Employers, or can undertake retrofitting work, a buyer will find it easier to identify the local suppliers that meet their needs and invite them to bid for various works-packages.
- The directory also provides local businesses the opportunity to advertise their goods or services free of charge and receive updates from the council about local supply chain opportunities from building and refurbishment projects in the borough.
- The directory is inclusive of organisations that support the core functions of the construction sector such as architects, specialist engineering firms and other related professionals, as well as generalist areas, such as office supply.
- Online launch of the directory will be in October 2023, with a business networking event inviting businesses from the directory and buyers in the borough taking place in the new year.



[Home](#) > [Community connections](#) > Construction Services



Construction Services

A directory to help you find a wide range of construction services based in Islington



All listings



Architecture, design and surveying consultancy



Builders, builders merchants and plant hire



Groundworks, site management and landscaping



Painters, plasterers and decorators



Pest control, asbestos, waste and cleaning services



Roofing and glazing



Safety



Structural engineering



Woodwork, metalwork and masonry



Utilities



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Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Further develop Cooperate Islington including piloting supplier readiness programme.
- Commissioning business support programme as part of UKSPF's direct allocation to boroughs that is focused on increasing resilience with a focus on underrepresented founders given the additional barriers faced in sustaining a business.
- Meet the Buyer event with Marlborough Highways in along with other Meet the Buyer events and a business networking event for construction directory businesses in the new year.
- Work with MSDUK, which is an organisation working to increase ethnic businesses in company supply chains, to build greater supplier diversity in Islington.



6. Growth Sectors

Championing social inclusion in Islington's growth sectors,
by expanding responsible, sustainable and inclusive
business practices and sector strategies



Growth Sectors

Over the past year we have:

- **Health and Care**- raised £250,000 to establish a five borough health academy in North Central London, working with North London Partners create a fully integrated GLA Social Care Academy
- **Green Economy** - We secured £400k in funding to commission a Net Zero Carbon Business Accelerator Programme that supports diverse start-ups in the engineering, digital, built environment, and engagement fields to work on solutions that directly address Islington council's priority and respond to green skills shortage and sustainability issues in the borough
- **Construction** - iWork construction team worked with Islington's New Build, apprenticeships and repairs team, to support four residents to gain degree level apprenticeships with the New build team. Residents were targeted from underrepresented groups and provided with pre-employment sessions and programmes.
- **Life Sciences** – Islington was successful, as the lead borough, in a bid from UK Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a programme to boost the life sciences social economy in partnership with Hackney, Camden, Tower Hamlets, Hammersmith & Fulham, Lambeth and Southwark
- **Tech & Knowledge** –360 residents have learned more about careers in tech, creative and science industries. 161 of these were on training courses including software development, digital marketing and UX design Additional activities have included networking events at workspaces and career insight sessions with employers.



LIFT – Creative Career Starts

Achievements

- 10 x 3 month paid internships with top creative agencies
- Industry training from City University
- Access to free coworking space at Better space Islington
- All interns from underrepresented backgrounds – three with disabilities



Results

- Added value for businesses; several recruited additional roles
- All have progressed into creative industry careers, half with their host employers
- Model has been adapted by advertising group Havas who have recruited to 3 cohorts of LIFT residents



LIFT - Residents into Media

The Havas Platform Program

- 5th largest media agency in the world, based in Kings Cross
- 20 local people placed in 6-month full time paid internships this year in tech, creative and business roles
- Insight and exposure into careers in advertising, communications and media
- Embedded training, mentoring and peer-to-peer support
- LIFT support throughout the recruitment process and for duration of internship
- Accessible eligibility criteria; no formal qualifications required
- All interns from underrepresented backgrounds, including people with disabilities, refugees, care leavers, and young carers



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Inspiring More Women into Construction – The American Tradeswomen’s Visit

- We welcomed a delegation of female construction workers from North America who joined us to discuss policies and activities to improve gender equity in construction training and employment .
- The delegation proved inspirational, and the council's construction employment team has resolved to focus their energies on bringing more women into the industry, using the 50 apprenticeships forecast for the Holloway Womens Prison site as the impetus for this.
- Since then the team have run three women specific insight sessions and have build a local talent pool of over 35 women interested in entering roles in construction.



Looking Ahead to 2023-24

Health and Care- working closely with partners in the NHS and Adult social care to ensure that local people are prioritised for local vacancies and pathways are created to address skills gaps in the sector.

Green Economy – Creating new opportunities in the ‘green economy with jobs related to new building techniques and reusing and recycling

Construction – Support apprentices to receive high quality training and sustained placements with a focus on increasing the number of women and residents from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

Tech & Knowledge – we are lead partner on LIFT (Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology), a £7.4m project to deliver jobs and training in tech and digital related jobs.

Life Sciences – £1.4m has been secured to support emerging social businesses and potential entrepreneurs in public health and life sciences, thereby increasing opportunities for underserved communities to benefit from economic opportunities in these sectors.



6. Anchor Institutions

Collaborating to Employ, Buy and Lead Locally



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Key Achievements

- Publicly launched the Islington Anchor Institutions Network in September 2022 at Islington Town Hall
- Ran a series of Task and Finish Group meetings and workshops with relevant members of each Anchor to develop an action plan.
- Held an event at City, University of London in April 2023 to review and sign-off action plan and finalise governance structures for the Network.



Looking Ahead 2023-24

- Co-ordinated work placement programme for schools
- Information event on how SMEs can use apprenticeship levy funding
- Jobs Fair or similar
- Launch of construction directory of local suppliers
- Review of retrofit/decarbonisation plans to identify opportunities to work together e.g., on joint procurement.



7. Social and Economic Infrastructure

Progressive, Affordable, Enabling



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Affordable Workspace

- Islington now has four operational workspaces which delivered £1,287,085 in social value in 2022/23, surpassing the £500k annual target.
- From this total figure, £630,829 was delivered specifically in Skills Training & Employment. Highlights include:
- Fashion Enter have been delivering more training and career support. Their courses continue to grow in popularity in the community.
- Fashion Enter are also collaborating with big fashion companies such as Net-a-Porter and N Brown to deliver workshops such as 'How to start a Micro Business,' 'Sewing & Upcycling' and a Level 3 Diploma in Creative Practice.
- Outlandish have taken on 40 apprentices undertaking a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Software Development through Founders & Coders at Space 4.
- Outlandish have recently introduced 2 masterclasses – Tech start-up and Circular Economy in order to support people into employment in the tech industry. These have proven to be popular already and are expected to continue to grow at Space 4.



AWS and LIFT – Engaging with Communities

Community lunches hosted at coworking spaces bring residents into affordable workspaces and give them the opportunity to network with startups.

This has led to startups creating job and internship roles for local people.

Hillside clubhouse, a local mental health organisation, have co-designed LIFT sessions with local employers including Google and London Bioscience Innovation Centre. One participant is now working as a graphic designer, and others are taking tech training courses.



Looking Ahead: Affordable Workspace Plans for 2023/24

- The program continues to grow with our first net zero building in Regents Wharf due to open next year.
- Over the next year, the AWS team will also be opening a further two sites:
 - Bingfield Garages
 - 250 City Road
- Garrett Street is scheduled for opening in 2025.



8. Net Zero Economy

Innovating, Embedding, Normalising



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Net Zero Economy

- 40 Energising Small Business grants approved resulting in £77,319 of measures installed and 32,281kg of annual carbon savings
- 19 new organisations signed up to Islington Sustainability Network (ISN)
- ISN one of nine London business networks chosen to partake in the GLA's Business Climate Challenge – currently offering an energy efficiency programme worth ~ £6000 for 32 local sites, working to 10% energy reduction targets
- Following a successful bid for £25K from the GLA's Licensing and Regulation Fund, supported and monitored a project that saw the expansion of the Wings ethical food delivery project into new areas of Islington with a business model that benefits businesses financially and reputationally
- Input to the Islington Food Strategy 2023-2028 and supported the Islington Food Partnership's relationship with local businesses
- Worked with the council's Transport Strategy team, GLA, TfL and Cross River Partnership (CRP) to improve understanding of the potential for micro-consolidation hubs to help switch freight from vans onto cargo bikes and to identify potential Islington sites
- Secured funding from CRP's Clean Air Logistics for London (CALL) project for two additional shared use cargo bikes (OurBikes) and finalised an agreement with Peddle My Wheels as a delivery partner
- Arranged for two new businesses to host the bikes in Highbury Barn and Blackstock Road.
- Compiled and promoted a list of the borough's gift shops to support the council's Shop Local campaign and produced guidance to encourage local shop vouchers to be used when awarding prizes and incentives, e.g. for completion of surveys and work competitions.



Green Social Value

- Two new apprenticeships were secured as part of the new highways contract with Marlborough Highways and will be starting in September 2023.
- We have developed a green Social Value framework for commissioning processes. Guidance has been created to support potential suppliers in understanding the council's progressive procurement policy, including circular economy principles. Efforts are being made to embed the need for green skills and jobs in council contracts and S106 agreements.
- As part of the new highways contract with Marlborough Highways, a number of training and workshop sessions have been secured for schools and communities. Additionally, the availability of employers offering Green Skills/Sustainability options on the World of Work menu for schools has been extended to include North London Heat and Power Project, Curtins, BDP, and Lendlease
- We are also developing a new, two tiered social value framework for future contracts with a list of 'required' and 'additional' green social value asks.



Embedding Net Zero- supporting business modal shift

- The council's shared use e-cargo bike scheme currently has four bikes, in Caledonian Road, Exmouth Market, Highbury Barn and Blackstock Road – and two more are to follow for Holloway Road.
- Each bike is hosted by a different community-minded business and can be hired by businesses, workers and residents through Peddle My Wheels' 'OurBike' platform. New businesses get three free hours to start, with others getting one free hour, and then the cost of using the scheme is £0.75 per 15 minutes.
- The OurBikes help businesses overcome congestion and traffic restrictions and demonstrate how bulky buys, heavy goods and even people and pets can be transported punctually and sustainably, saving time and running costs - hence paving the way for greener, healthier neighbourhoods.
- The bikes also open new opportunities for deliveries and customer engagement and have helped businesses increase their presence in the community and secure positive publicity.
- A wide range of businesses have used the bikes, from a pottery studio and dry cleaners to cafes and grocery shops - and a food waste collection business described the bikes as fundamental to their journey, considerably building capacity and saving time.



Business Support for Environmental Gain

- The Briki Greek Café and delicatessen in Exmouth Market were supported with an Energy Relief Grant in 2023, one of 130 Islington businesses benefitting from the scheme.
- A new relationship has developed with the Inclusive Economy team resulting in the café hosting electric cargo bikes for local deliveries and employing local residents



Looking Ahead 2023/24

- Ambitions to extend and expand free Islington Sustainability Network (ISN) sustainability business mentoring programme
- Deliver on Business Climate Challenge audit recommendations and support those climate challenge businesses who are committed to meeting their 10% energy efficiency targets
- Host the ISN annual AGM/sustainability conference
- Work with Cross River Partnership (CRP) on the delivery of their new Smarter Greener Logistics project with the location of an additional two shared use cargo bikes (OurBikes) along the A1 Holloway Road air quality focus area, between Highbury and Archway
- Deliver a promotions strategy for the shared use cargo bikes and to encourage modal shift for business deliveries.
- Continue to work with partners, including CRP, the GLA and TfL, to identify potential Islington sites for the location of micro-consolidation hubs and support the development of the Islington Freight Strategy
- Activate a shared use electric car scheme in Archway to benefit all town centre group businesses
- Work with Islington Council's Commercial Waste services to increase the number of businesses recycling their food waste
- Further promote the council's Shop Local campaign, including delivery of at least one new local economy loyalty card scheme to support local businesses and reduce residents carbon footprints



9. Challenging Inequalities in Employment and Business

Targeting, Enterprising, Rebalancing



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Challenging inequalities in Employment and Business

Over the past year we have:

- Funded the Enterprise Support Programme (ESP) and the Inclusive Entrepreneurship Programme (IEP) both of which were delivered by Action for Race Equality.
- Worked with London Met University to better understand disability unemployment in Islington, including recommendations on how disabled people can be better supported to find work.
- Began to implement the recommendations of the 2022 London Met University research report on how to tailor employment support in particular for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.
- Supported 35 people from underrepresented backgrounds into paid employment in tech, creative and sciences including jobs, apprenticeships and paid placements via the LIFT programme. Job roles have included software engineer, full stack developer and graphic designer.



Supporting people from underrepresented communities to develop employment skills

- I moved into Islington about five years ago, I was always at home sometimes helping doing volunteering for my local church. Being a single mum of two I wanted to ensure I could help my children.
- I met Selina at Choices – a community advice project in Archway - where Selina does outreach work once a week. Selina introduced herself and told me about the different courses I could access and my employment opportunities. I was excited and we signed up to the ACL courses.
- I did my assessments for Maths and English and my results were better than expected, so I started at English level 1 and Maths entry 3. I passed my English exam in March and have started Level 2.
- I also joined the community sewing class, which I have now completed and made two skirts. I am making a shirt this term and thoroughly enjoying it. I completed a 4-week digital skills course for beginners, and I am currently doing a drop-in session for a computer skills gadget workshop.
- By doing all these courses I am upskilling myself and this is building back my confidence. Selina has helped me in more ways than I can express, and she is always at the end of the phone if I need to talk to her. She has been a great help.”



Selina, Outreach Worker @ Choices



Looking Ahead 2023-24

- A 'Community Unionism' project will map workplace harms in Islington, and identify opportunities for unionisation to address these issues, supported by local communities
- A university-led evaluation of our approach to allocating resources for employment support in Islington
- Implementing the recommendations from LMU's research report on supporting residents with disabilities into work.

