

The London Eye Community Chest 2024/25 - Evaluation Report



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Introduction

South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours (SoWN) was absolutely delighted to be given the opportunity to re-launch the London Eye Community Chest Grants Programme for 2024/25. Previously run very successfully from 2010 to 2017, this grants programme has been reintroduced to support the work of charities and community groups working in the Waterloo and South Bank area surrounding the London Eye, with the focus on projects that promote 'Community resilience and capacity-building'. This focus was based on detailed research to understand the current social and economic situation in the area, assess the policy and funding environment, examine the experience of other community chest programmes and make recommendations. We believe that the results have amply demonstrated the value of a fund focused on the needs of local communities and designed to develop the capacity of smaller community and voluntary organisations.

After an open application process between September and November 2024, a group of judges drawn from local councillors, the London Eye and individuals with experience of local needs, selected 13 diverse projects, which have been implemented during 2025. Most have either met or exceeded their objectives and have been greatly valued by participants. Inevitably a few experienced issues along the way, and not all quite achieved the ambitious targets they had set. But this is only to be expected and does not reflect on the tremendous energy and commitment shown by the many individuals involved. The results have more than validated the approach taken and shows how even relatively small grants, between £1,000 and £8,000, can provide impetus for projects that have real impact. It is estimated that the £60,000 funding from the Community Chest matched or supplemented additional funds in excess of £60,000 and volunteering activity to the value of some £125,000. Together the 13 projects delivered 302 sessions, involving 2,569 direct beneficiaries. Outcomes include:

- 438 children and young people engaged in a range of structured activity such as dance, careers support and sports
- 460 adult members of the community, including older people, enjoying opportunities for community engagement, socialising, education, skills enhancement, creative writing and performance.
- 1,650 homeless people provided with hot breakfasts
- 21 refugees given socialising and counselling opportunities while learning about the Waterloo and South Bank area.

South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours would like particularly to thank Merlin Entertainments and the Borough of Lambeth for the funding, made possible through a S.106 agreement, that makes the Community Chest such a valuable resource for the local community. And we also thank the organisations and volunteers who seized the opportunity to make this a more resilient and engaged community. We look forward to consolidating the success of the programme through future rounds of the London Eye Community Chest.

Tim Hollins

SoWN Lead, London Eye Community Chest

A summary of the projects and their key outcomes is given in the table below.

Summary of Outcomes

Organisation	Amount	Project Description and Intended Outcomes	Results
Archbishops Park Community Trust	£ 3,932	“Gardening for All”: To create a new planting area in Archbishop’s Park and build a variety of new wildlife habitats by engaging 8 volunteers over 14 sessions	36 volunteers were engaged over 16 sessions which was much higher than expected. A new planting area was created, transforming an overgrown and neglected space into a new garden. Spring bulbs have been planted for a display of flowers in 2026. Perennials have been included to provide interest year-round. Four new wildlife habitats have been created along with a “dead hedge”.
Bankside Open Spaces Trust	£7,580	Half term & Family fun at Living Space: To provide free food and activities to 100 young people from low-income households during 10 sessions over school holidays and to low-income families at a one-off fun day.	For both half terms a total of 320 registrations were completed and there were 782 attendances at the two half term holiday programmes. 1,564 meals were provided and 42 volunteer hours were provided as match funding. 94% of children reported being healthier and 76% reported being happier as a result.
The Bridge at Waterloo	£5,000	“Room For You”: To bring people together who would not normally meet and provide a supportive, safe and accessible space where they can develop ideas and community activities.	Over 80 adults attended each week to take part and volunteer, many local to St John’s. It provided work placements for 20 SEND local students aged 16-25yrs in partnership with Roots and Shoots and Southwark College, plus volunteering opportunities for unemployed or retired people.

Bright Centres	£ 6,102	“Bright Inspires” : Delivering targeted activities, this project supports participants aged 16-25 years in breaking through societal and economic barriers, enabling them to achieve their career aspirations and contribute positively to their communities	At least 8 participants attended sessions and engaged with one-to-one mentoring. They increased their employability, confidence, networking and teamwork skills. There is still final monitoring to come.
Coin Street Community Builders	£3,465	“Herbs, Flowers, Teas and Treats” : A monthly session in Archbishop’s Park where older adults get together to enjoy a wellbeing activity and walk in nature. Also delivering a summer lunch party in the park to increase awareness and use of the park and increase social activity. An additional session was the stall at the Wonderful Waterloo Southbank Fun Day attracting 40 participants.	Overall, the project benefitted 37 people. Most participants live in the very local area although 20 were just outside the Waterloo and South Bank ward. At least 9 participants were in their 70s and 6 in their 80s. 12 people have a disability/ medical condition but still enjoyed getting out for a walk around the park and engaging in social activities.
Colombo Centre	£5,840	“Jazz for All” : The project aims to help 100 residents including 30 children to access an intergenerational cross-cultural music and dance experience for residents in SE1. In collaboration with the professional dance group Jazz Dance Elite and the renowned jazz ensemble Tomorrow’s Warriors, the project brought together children, young people, adults, seniors, people from low-income and migrant backgrounds, and people with disabilities.	Jazz for All: The Big Shim Sham was an intergenerational community project designed to reconnect local residents with the rich cultural and social heritage of jazz dance. The project successfully increased confidence, social connection, cultural awareness, and community cohesion. 64 children and young people participated at classes at Southwark College, Coin Street Easter Camp and Oasis Southbank Primary School. 22 adults attended regular dance sessions at Colombo Centre and over 50 participants joined into public workshops at the Southbank Centre on the ballroom floor.

Futures Theatre	£5,539	<p>“My name is Mud”: To creatively engage 20 marginalised at-risk women and non-binary people in the Waterloo area through targeted creative writing and production development workshops. The project ended in January with creative song writing activities to increase self-expression.</p>	<p>Mudlarking was a very popular offer. Women were enthusiastic to try something new and all participants spoke about being curious as to what it would be like. They were introduced to the history of mudlarking, health and safety, and a number of historical facts about the area and beyond. Participants also spoke about working outside, how calming it was to be on the foreshore. 15 women engaged in 8 creative writing and songwriting workshops, and more will follow.</p>
London City Mission Webber Street Homeless Day Centre	£4,000	<p>“Hot Meals for the Homeless”: To provide hot meals for 80 vulnerable, homeless clients receiving additional personal support a week. To develop stronger partnerships with other organisations and local residents.</p>	<p>The project delivered 11,500 breakfasts to 1,650 guests from January to December 2025. £19,000 of cash match funding was contributed. 3,360 hours of volunteer time was donated at 70 hours a week. LCM/Webber Street work closely with other organisations, collaborating and sharing information. Webber Street is now part of the coalition of 82 organisations and individuals in the ‘Homewards’ Lambeth project – connected to the Royal Foundation.</p>
Garden Museum	£1,307	<p>“Neighbours Day”: To open the Garden Museum for free to local Lambeth residents for a day of creativity and well-being, and to provide a safe and social atmosphere to meet our neighbours. The grant paid for targeted publicity and promotion on neighbouring housing estates.</p>	<p>104 local people attended the fun day, thanks to the promotional outreach to 6,000 households, funded by this grant. The percentage of attendees overall from the Waterloo & South Bank Ward was 21%, which was lower than expected, but overall, there was a high turnout for the day. Local residents enjoyed a fantastic free event full of fun and unique activities.</p>

Oasis Waterloo	£ 6,150	<p>“Youth Services”: To deliver inclusive weekly football and mentoring sessions for 25 participants aged 12-16 years old at Archbishops Park pitches. Young people will make better decisions, raise aspirations and be more connected to their community.</p>	<p>Weekly sessions have been very popular, with up to 55 young people attending at any time. Feedback from young people, teachers and parents has been extremely positive and the young people are benefitting from participating by showing positive behaviours at school, volunteering and winning leagues which builds confidence and positive futures.</p>
Waterloo Community Counselling	£ 3,285	<p>“Building community resilience among local refugees” The aims of 6 local community walks were to be less socially isolated, have increased knowledge of the local area and culture and for raised levels of self-confidence.</p>	<p>Waterloo Community Counselling successfully delivered a series of 6 wellbeing walks, led by a professional guide and taken up by 21 refugees from Lambeth, Southwark and Westminster. However, despite strong efforts, only a minority were resident in the grant catchment area. Participants were asked to rate how the activity made them feel across three dimensions: Less Socially Isolated 86% agreed, Increased Knowledge of the Local Area and Culture 90% agreed and for Increased Confidence 76% agreed.</p>
Waterloo Football Club	£ 5,000	<p>“Waterloo United” Delivering 8 sessions football coaching sessions for 70 participants a week with professional coaches. Participants learned how to increase their social interaction and improve their health and fitness levels.</p>	<p>This project increased sports participation, improve health and wellbeing and increase community cohesion for 72 young people across differing estates and post code areas within Southbank and Waterloo.</p>

Wellington Mills TRA	£3,285	“Oral History Project” : This project taught participants to increase social contact, improve health and wellbeing and increase a sense of belonging for residents on the Wellington Mills Estate. This was achieved through collecting oral histories at TRA meetings, coffee mornings, social events and delivering a 50th Anniversary exhibition on the estate.	The 50 th Anniversary activities attracted 88 participants. The residents set up the 50th Anniversary Website where Ethical Pixels were commissioned to create a website to celebrate the Wellington Mills 50th anniversary. The site is now live and contains documents, newsletters and photos of the history of the estate, residents and local area. There were over 80 hits on the site initially and the feedback was very positive.
Sub total	£60,000		
Administration	£5,000		
TOTAL	£65,000		

1. Archbishops Park Community Trust

Project: "Gardening for All"

Start Date: 1st January 2025 End Date: Nov 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

The main outcomes of this project were to create a new planting area in Archbishop's Park and build a variety of new wildlife habitats by engaging 8 volunteers over 14 sessions led by garden therapists. The outcomes were overachieved as APCT attracted 36 volunteers and ran 16 sessions. Four different habitats have been completed, built from scratch using garden canes, re-cycled timber, fallen branches from the park, discarded pallets, leaves, empty food tins, straw, cones and chicken wire, a "dead hedge" and a new garden space were created in neglected areas of the site which greatly enhance a public park visited by thousands of people. The project took longer than expected due to difficult dry weather conditions, but it was completed before the end of 2025. An additional development was that new partnership was developed with local company, TCV, who supplied many new volunteers.



FEEDBACK:

One of the volunteers building the dead hedge commented, "it's been hard work, but I learned a lot. I've never done anything like this before".

A testimonial from a volunteer who joined us during the project; "gardening club was the highlight of my summer! As a beginner I learned so much...it felt great to positively contribute to the Lambeth community".

Park users have provided positive feedback regarding the improvements made to the park, including: "This [area of garden] really is splendid. You've improved it a lot." [Park user]

SoWN Comment: The project has been very successful both in numbers of volunteers and the impact in the park for local residents and visitors to enjoy. The emphasis on increasing biodiversity and creating wildlife and insect habitats is particularly welcome.

2. Bankside Open Spaces Trust

Project: "Half term & Family Fun at Living Space"

Start Date: 17th February 2025 End Date: 31st October 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This grant supported the provision of half term activities for local children and offered sports, fun workshops and two meals each day during February and October half term. Young people learned lots of new skills including things like slime making, popcorn making, theatre workshop, puppet making, African dancing, Korean Karaoke, crotchet, pompom making, games in the playground and new video games. Although a lot of them had friends already attending, over half made new friends during both the holidays. On some days parents were also able to attend and receive a meal which helped families struggling on a low income.



The volunteer contribution of 64 hours to the project was an additional outcome. In the survey responses, 94% respondents all agreed they are more active and feel physically healthier because of taking part in the sessions. 76% felt happier and many children made new friends. In addition, when asked what they enjoy the most, almost everyone commented on having fun with games and workshops:

"I loved "getting to go wild outdoors" "I enjoyed the dodgeball" "My favourite thing to play is football" "I really like the spring thing and the slide and all the new friends that I've made. I also like the pompom making and crotchet"

"The food is also really good, especially the pizza and pasta. And I really like the workshops like the karaoke one"

SoWN Comment: This project achieved and exceeded its objectives, and we are hopeful that ways will be found to continue these much-needed holiday sessions, to the benefit of the children and their families living around the Living Space.

3. The Bridge at Waterloo

Project: Wellbeing Club

Start Date: 15th January 2025 End Date: 31st July 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

The funding enabled the continuation of Room for You over two terms from January to July 2025 and employ a session worker to support our local volunteers and young people with special educational needs and disabilities on their community work placements in the project. Also, the grant supported local people to be workshops leaders, Anna Robinson as Creative Writing Club tutor and Chris Clarke the Art Club tutor. 149 participants took part in trips, activities and/ or volunteered over 24 weeks of sessions. 34 participants were from the direct catchment area with the others being from neighbouring areas. 3360 hours of volunteer time were given to the project mainly from students at Southwark college who have additional learning needs. The impact on all participants was to feel less isolated and more confident, and to increase their access to creative activities. 73 participants increased physical activity through yoga or gardening.



Feedback:

“It’s like having another family.” “We’ve had people round for Sunday lunch. I lived in this area but now feel properly connected to it, connected to care and feel a part of this community. Through connection, stories have a human face, like refugees, or homeless people, for example. ” It’s a safe space where you can get information. Should be there for everybody. It helps you avoid difficulties and things getting worse. We meet many people, many new people, people who were stuck at home”

SoWN Comment: This project was clearly valued by those who took part and encouraged healthy socialising. The Community Chest grant was 36% of the total project cost (excluding volunteer time), and 38% of participants were from the catchment area. So, although most participants were from outside the catchment area, the ‘local resident’ criterion of the grant was met.

4. Bright Centres

Name of Project: Bright Inspires

Start Date: 1st May 2025 End Date: 31st October 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This youth programme focussed on supporting 16–25-year-olds into being more employable by delivering sessions and one to one support. The main aims were to increase 20 young people’s confidence, networking skills, teamwork and communication.

Due to the summer holidays many students were away or not available, so the activities happened later than expected. Eight young adults did receive intensive support and had additional services such as CV writing, interview skills and extra mentoring.



“At Bright we believe that a brighter future starts with a bright opportunity. We work closely with local schools, Russell-group universities and world-famous employment companies to provide an efficient and bespoke network of professionals and future employees. Our close ties with corporate companies such as Deloitte means our students and sponsors are exposed to the most elite and unique shadowing opportunities, work experience placements, internships, apprenticeships and graduate jobs.”

SoWN Comment: This project is a much-needed resource for young adults entering the world of work straight from secondary education. The project replaced another grantee’s project which wasn’t able to go ahead, and so started later than others, in mid-year, causing problems with student engagement. Numbers were therefore below expectation, but this allowed some additional support for those who did take part. At the time of writing, we are still waiting for the final report on the project.

5. Coin Street Community Builders

Name of Project: Herbs, Flowers, Teas and Treats

Start Date: October 2024 End Date: May 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This project is aimed at older, isolated adults and delivers monthly sessions at Archbishop's Park where residents can enjoy refreshments, a walk around the park and wellbeing activities such as collage, wreath making and creating bath bombs. The outcomes for participants were that they would be more connected to their community, improve mental wellbeing by spending time outdoors and be more active and improve physical health. 100% of those surveyed agreed they increased their social and mental wellbeing during the project and 90% stated their physical health had improved.

Overall, the project benefitted 37 people, plus an additional 40 people who attended the Herbs, flowers, Teas and Treats stall at the Waterloo and Southbank Fun Day. Most participants live in the very local area with 17 people out of 37 in the Waterloo and South Bank ward. At least 9 participants were in their 70s and 6 in their 80s, showing that Coin Street Community Builders were successful in reaching the older residents that they set out to engage with. 12 people had a disability or a medical condition with several members of the group having mobility issues, but they still enjoyed getting out for a walk around the park.



Feedback:

'The walk around the park is lovely, especially when we have explanations about the plants and trees'

'Ladies in charge are brilliant' 'I have really enjoyed meeting local people and the camaraderie'

'For me it has all been perfect and a huge thank you to all involved'

'The walk round the park is really enjoyable' 'Lots of laughter really helps (my wellbeing)'

SoWN Comment: This project delivered valuable outcomes particularly for older residents living near Archbishop's Park. But although 46% of attendees lived in the catchment area, others live just outside, so that the 'resident' criterion was not achieved. However, it is virtually impossible to turn people away from a project like this because they live just outside the catchment area.

6. Colombo Centre

Name of Project: Jazz for All

Start Date: May 2025 End Date: September 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

Jazz for All: The Big Shim Sham was an intergenerational community project designed to reconnect local residents with the rich cultural and social heritage of jazz dance. In collaboration with the professional dance group Jazz Dance Elite and the jazz ensemble Tomorrow's Warriors, the project brought together children, young people, adults, seniors, people from low-income and migrant backgrounds, and people with disabilities. Participants shared joyful, creative movement and performed together with live jazz music at the Southbank Centre. There were additional performances and workshops at community days at Coin Street neighbourhood centre and at St John's Church Waterloo.

Key achievements included: a one-hour performance as part of Bring Your Dance at the Southbank Centre, weekly community workshops, new friendships formed across age groups, and a significant increase in participation at the Sunday workshops. The project successfully increased confidence, social connection, cultural awareness, and community cohesion. 64 children and young people participated at classes at Southwark College, Coin Street Easter Camp and Oasis Southbank Primary School. 22 adults attended regular dance sessions at Colombo Centre and over 50 participants joined into public workshops at the Southbank Centre on the ballroom floor.



SoWN Comment: This project has been very successful and created a new way to bring many diverse groups together in the local area and to use the cultural offers at Colombo, Southwark College and the Southbank Centre.

7. London City Mission Webber Street Homeless Day Centre

Name of Project: "Hot Meals for the Homeless"

Start Date: January 2025 End Date: December 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This London Eye grant contributed £4,000 towards Webber Street Homeless Day Centre Breakfasts during 2026. This enabled the centre to provide varied and hot food to our guests, which is particularly necessary for their wellbeing in the winter months to increase physical strength and resilience to cope better with life on the streets. The centre provides up to 80 breakfasts for guests in two sittings each Monday to Thursday morning. Since the autumn a new 'women only safe space' was introduced on Friday mornings, the numbers are currently low at around seven participants, but rising and a continental style breakfast, showers, toiletries and art activities are provided.

The guests have given positive feedback about the welcome and breakfasts provided – including the variety offered. Average attendance has risen from 55 per session in summer 2025 to 64 per session in winter months. 11,500 hot breakfasts were served to 1,650 beneficiaries over the year. The project attracts a huge volunteer team who contribute 70 hours a week. Local housed residents are encouraged to volunteer, and the centre is now part of the "Homewards" coalition involving 82 partners across Lambeth tackling homelessness.



" For example, a guest who has been coming for years to breakfast, has given up drinking for 8mths through encouragement and support during breakfast. S said we are not just giving food, but guidance and hope too, which is helping him to turn his life around. A Guest cried with joy that the place showed we care, and again, is looking through the fellowship of a hearty breakfast, to get his life back on track"

SoWN Comment: The Webber Street Homeless Day Centre provides an important resource in Waterloo, where rough-sleeping and homelessness are significant. These breakfasts with additional ongoing support are a vital core offer at the Centre and the grant selection panel recognised the value they would bring to visitors experiencing both physical and mental health issues.

8. Futures Theatre

Name of Project: My Name is Mud

Start Date: September 2025 End Date: January 2026

Summary of key achievements and outputs

Futures Theatre delivered a series of three mudlarking sessions for local women with writer and mud larker Abi Zackarian, exploring the Thames foreshore below the Oxo Tower and Gabriel's Wharf plus a consultation session with potential participants. Five creative writing sessions were run, taking mudlarking history and the foreshore of the river as our starting point. The architectural and social history of Waterloo and how the river connected (and still connects) local people to the rest of the world was explored. 10 women shared their own creative writing they had produced during the sessions. Community choir sessions were also run, led by musical theatre composer Erin McKellar, with 5 participants writing their own original songs, inspired by the sounds and sights of the foreshore of the Thames. Everyone who participated said they had been inspired by the sessions. The majority of women also said their wellbeing had improved after participating and how calming it was to be on the foreshore.



“Mudlarking was interesting. Opened up a whole new world.” Participant

“They were introduced to the history of mudlarking, health and safety, and a number of historical facts about the area and beyond. Finds from the day taught us about the architectural and social history of Waterloo and how the river connected (and still connects) local people to the rest of the world.”

Workshop Leader

“It is magical to do something new and meet new people.” Participant

SoWN Comment: We note that the project created a rich cultural experience. However, 60% of the participants were from outside the target area of benefit, so that this project did not meet the ‘majority resident’ criterion. Any future project should be more aimed at the truly local community with a local partnership.

9. Garden Museum

Name of Project: Neighbours Day

Delivery Date: July 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

On Sunday 13 July the Garden Museum welcomed 496 people, including 104 neighbours from Waterloo and South Bank to the Museum for the annual Neighbours Day. The theme this year was Garden Party inspired by the current Cecil Beaton exhibition. It was a scorching day, but this didn't get in the way of face painting, bath salt making, flower arranging and extracting and examining strawberry DNA in the Museum. Outside neighbours enjoyed nasturtium potting, guided walks of our local fruit trees, and breathwork workshops that made the most of the shade in Old Paradise Gardens.

The day was topped off with a performance from Lambeth Wind Orchestra and lots of free cake. The aims of the grant of promoting the museums social and creative activities to 6,000 households and engaging local people in the free Neighbours Day were achieved.

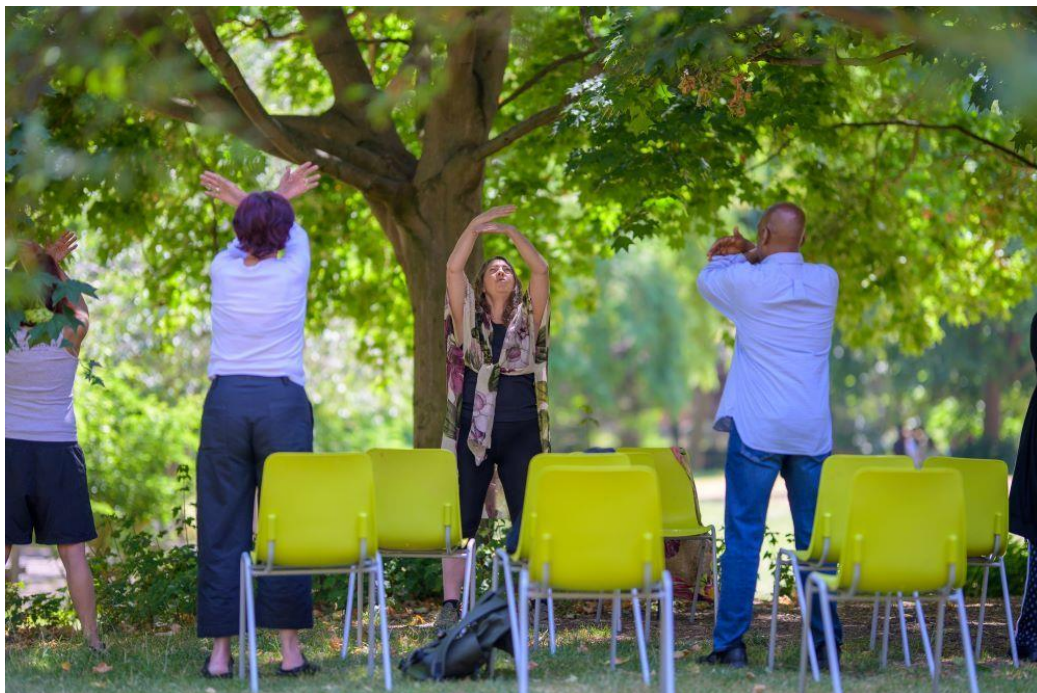


Image by Graham Lacda

“104 local people attended the fun day due to the promotion outreach to 6000 households. The percentage of attendees overall from local area was 21% which was lower than expected but there was a high turnout for the day”

SoWN Comment: The relatively small Community Chest grant (£1,300) was specifically to enable the museum to promote this day to the c.6,000 households in Waterloo and South Bank area. This was achieved, and no doubt had an impact on local attendance, even if total numbers were relatively low.

10. Oasis Waterloo

Name of Project: Youth Services

Start Date: January 2025 End Date: December 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This project helped young people gain access to a supportive network of local providers who create holistic interventions and lifechanging opportunities for young people. As a result of the funding and ability to sustain our project, the number of registered players doubled, each week the football programme engaged on average 55 young people per week.

Mentoring sessions have been a success with parents stating that the 1-2-1 mentoring service has helped improve the relationship with their child. Teachers have shared that 1-2-1 sessions have shown to improve young people's engagement in school and reduce sanctions, and in turn contributed to a positive culture in the school. The young footballers won a League Cup Final in May, bringing pride for everyone involved. The grant helped Oasis to raise their profile adding credibility to the service which increased our opportunity to network with local providers. The first awards ceremony for players was at the local Park Plaza Hotel. Blasé Ballers is growing into a community asset and the funding from the London Eye Community Chest this year has helped Oasis to take that leap forward. Football scouts have come in to do workshops and speeches.

Players have left those sessions with comments such as "I now have better understanding of the football league, and I can set realistic targets" and from the feedback survey 100% of players stated they feel they have power over their futures.



***"SL has really improved in his behaviour and attendance since attending the Football Intervention with Waterloo Hub. In year 8 he received several suspensions for disruptive behaviour, and his attendance was below 80%. However, since attending the club and growing his confidence and understanding of skills and discipline, he has received no suspensions, reduced his detention count by over 50%, increased his Reward Points and improved attendance."* (Teacher)**

SoWN Comment: This project, using football to engage young people and then provide additional support, appears to have been very successful. It provides an important resource in Waterloo, where projects for potentially disengaged young people are immensely valuable.

11. Waterloo Community Counselling

Name of Project: Building Community Resilience Among Local Refugees

Start Date: May 2025 End Date: September 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This project, delivered in partnership with the Lambeth Tour Guides Association (LTGA), aimed to build community resilience among refugees and asylum seekers through a series of six guided walks in the Waterloo and South Bank area. The walks were designed to foster connection, wellbeing and local engagement, with a particular focus on beneficiaries living within the Grant Zone. A detailed schedule of walks was developed each with a unique theme exploring local history, culture, and hidden stories.

Recruiting participants from within the grant zone proved very challenging due to the limited availability of asylum accommodation in the area as well as low response rates from identified contacts. Each walk lasted 1.5–2 hours and concluded with a picnic lunch, providing opportunities for social connection and informal peer support. The walks received positive feedback from participants, who were also asked to rate how the activity made them feel across three dimensions: Less Socially Isolated, 86% agreed; Increased Knowledge of the Local Area and Culture, 90% agreed; and for Increased Confidence, 76% agreed.

21 individual people attended at least one walk, with 37 total attendances. The project successfully engaged a diverse group of refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom were experiencing social isolation, loneliness and a lack of community engagement. The partnership with LTGA proved highly effective, with guides tailoring content to be accessible and engaging for the group. 52% of participants were residents of The City of Westminster, Lambeth and Southwark.



“I would like to express my appreciation to our funders for their generosity, and to let them know that their support has not only contributed to improving our mental well-being, but has also equipped us with knowledge to better serve our community through a deeper understanding of our rich history”

SoWN Note: In making this grant the grant selection panel knew the difficulties of working with refugee groups but felt that the need to engage refugees justified the effort. We have no doubt WCC made strong efforts to identify and engage refugees living in the area. However, although participants valued the project, it fell significantly short of meeting the ‘majority resident’ criterion.

12. Waterloo Sports and Football Club

Name of Project: Waterloo United

Start Date: April 2025 End Date: September 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

'Waterloo United' aims to use sport to strengthen our community, ensuring cost is not a barrier, increasing participation by young people and improving health and community cohesion across differing estates, and post code areas within the Southbank/Waterloo area. The project was attended by 72 attendees and 98% stated their health and wellbeing was improved by attending the 8 sessions at Hatfields football pitches. "Waterloo United was an overwhelming success, bringing together young people from different estates and backgrounds, helping to break down barriers. 100% of the participants stated that they wanted to attend more WSFC projects and one of the things they liked best about the project was meeting new people from other estates – so Waterloo United can be seen as a first step to increasing social cohesion and building school-club links."

- Luke (coach/mentor)



Feedback from participants:

"The football sessions have been really helpful and make a positive impact on the community. They bring everyone together and give us something we can all enjoy and share in common. It's a great way to unite people and create a supportive, active environment."

"Love the sessions, very good quality of football being played across the board and high-level coaching which you never get from free sessions. The team at Waterloo make it an inclusive place for everyone to come and play and in a time where there's not a lot of free sessions happening for the youth it has a great impact on the boys and young men that attend the session. The community feeling you get from it isn't found anywhere else, and for me it's had a great impact on my character and mannerisms as a man!"

SoWN Note: This project exceeded its targets and provided participants with a range of benefits including improved health, fitness and team building. Keeping young people positively engaged and away from the risk of anti-social behaviour is very valuable in the Waterloo/ Southbank area.

12. Wellington Mills Residents' Association

Name of Project: 50th Anniversary Oral History Project

Start Date: January 2025 End Date: December 2025

Summary of key achievements and outputs

This project used the 50th anniversary of the Wellington Mills Estate in Waterloo to increase social contact, community and a sense of belonging for residents. This was achieved through collecting oral histories at TRA meetings, coffee mornings, social events and delivering a 50th Anniversary exhibition on the estate attracting 88 participants.

The residents set up the 50th Anniversary Website where Ethical Pixels were commissioned to create a website to celebrate the Wellington Mills 50th anniversary. The site is now live and contains documents, newsletters and photos of the history of the estate, residents and local area. They are able to add additional information, such as oral histories and photos etc. There were over 80 hits on the site initially and the feedback was very positive. [Wellington Mills 50th - History of the Wellington Mills Estate](#)

This project was very successful in terms of both numbers of people attending and enhanced enthusiasm for future events. There is growing interest across the estate regarding future projects, and residents are volunteering to assist in more events.



February meeting

We held a very successful meeting on 24 February. In addition to several current residents, the Simmonds family, who moved in when the estate first opened were able to join us. Julie Simmonds, the first baby born on the estate, came with her mum and dad. It would be lovely if other people who grew up here could join us at future meetings (maybe in the evening or weekends). We'd love it if they could share anecdotes, memories and photographs.

Bruce Cagneux, the former estate administrator (now retired) joined us and remembered his time here very clearly and very fondly. Everyone who came joined in lively conversations about life at Wellington Mills in earlier times. For example, when Nelson Mandela and Prince Charles (as was) came to the police station following a visit to Brixton in July 1996.



SoWN Note: This project exceeded its target of reaching 20 residents and provided 88 participants with opportunities to strengthen their community, as well as giving some a range of new skills. We hope ways will be found for the tenant's group to continue their programme of activities into the future.

Feedback from Grantees:

Thank you for this grant, it has helped tremendously for us to plan the food provision for our guests in 2025. It would be wonderful if this could be an annual award, which we would happily provide receipts/reports for, as if ongoing this would enable us to continue to provide a hot breakfast for some of the most vulnerable people in SoWN area.

Everything was very straightforward, and we really appreciate the opportunity to provide the hugely needed two weeks of holiday activities for young people.

It was lovely to be included at events about the project, particularly the celebration at the London Eye. The process has been straight forward and manageable. The very narrow focus on Waterloo and Southbank ward can be a barrier to reaching more local people.

The ease of the application and the support from the team behind it was refreshing. The opportunity to showcase the Garden Museum's Community Chest-funded Neighbours Day and wider programme, as well as meeting other grantee projects at St John's Crypt in March was a wonderful and important part of the process.