



LHC MIDLANDS
LONDON
SOUTH EAST

LHC Community Benefit Fund Report

2018-2024

Contents

Foreword	03
Celebrating the power of collaboration and community impact in LHC	04
The Need for Community Impact	05
The Journey of the LHC Community Benefit Fund in London and South East	06
The Role of LHC and Locality	08
London and South East Community Benefit Fund Impact	08
Case Studies	13
What's next?	15



Foreword

As we celebrate six years of the LHC Community Benefit Fund, we reflect on the programme’s significant achievements and lasting social impact across the region.

The Fund was established to support local communities by working with our public sector clients and partners; investing in 2018 meaningful projects in London and the SE (excluding the Midlands, which was amalgamated into the region in 2024), that address social challenges, enhance well-being, and promote inclusion. This report highlights our journey, successes, and the powerful difference made through collaboration with our valued partners.

George Stevens
Director of Communities

Celebrating the power of collaboration and community impact in LHC

LHC was created by a Joint Committee of local London Boroughs in 1966 to establish common technical and social standards through procurement by setting policy and ensuring solutions for housing, construction, and infrastructure projects were properly managed and aligned to public sector need.

LHC Joint Committee members have been receiving Community Benefit funding since 2018 to support community projects in London and South East.

The LHC Community Benefit Fund is a dedicated funding initiative established by LHC Procurement Group, designed to support local communities in collaboration with our public sector clients in the region.

The Joint Committee was replaced in April 2023 by the LHC regional committee which now encompasses Midlands, London and South East England.

This reports focuses on the delivery of the Community Benefit Fund under the Joint Committee and thanks to the organisations who were involved:

LHC Joint Committee Members


TOWER HAMLETS


www.ealing.gov.uk


Hackney


HILLINGDON
LONDON


Brent


ENFIELD
Council


HARINGEY
LONDON


Lambeth


Buckinghamshire
Council


ISLINGTON
For a more equal future


Southwark
Council

Local Need

Lasting social impact is only delivered when outcomes are achieved that meet local needs. Using our regional partnerships and relationships that champion a local approach and working closely with our committee partners to tell us what their tenants, residents or users require remains central in our approach. Our committee members and their Community Benefit Fund delivery partners are often community anchor organisations that are well-established, trusted and at the heart of the local community.

We have been working with these partners embedded in the community and have a deep understanding of local challenges, priorities, and opportunities. Their close relationships with residents and stakeholders mean they are ideally placed to identify emerging needs and deliver tailored, meaningful interventions that acknowledge local challenges and priorities. Working with these partners to deliver the Community Benefit Fund has increased our ability to deliver stronger outcomes, greater inclusion, and lasting social value across London and the South East.



The Need for Community Impact

Communities in the UK and beyond continue to face a range of critical social and economic challenges that require targeted support and intervention.

Some of the most pressing needs include:

- Cost of Living and Fuel Poverty:** Rising energy prices have left millions struggling to afford basic utilities, with many individuals unable to heat their homes adequately, leading to health and wellbeing concerns.
- Tenancy Sustainment and Homelessness Prevention:** Housing insecurity remains a major issue, particularly for young people, care leavers, and individuals facing mental health, addiction challenges and those recovering from domestic abuse.
- Health and Well-being Support:** Mental health issues are on the rise, with significant increases in anxiety, depression, social isolation and reduced access to community-based support.

- Financial Hardship:** Low income families and individuals are facing increased debt. With many people unable to afford rent, food, and essential goods, there is significant need for financial education, income maximisation services, and employment support.
- Energy Efficiency and Sustainability:** Many homes across the UK lack proper insulation, leading to high energy costs and inefficient heating.

At the core of the LHC Community Benefit Fund is the belief that strong, resilient communities are built through collaboration. The fund has brought together local authorities, housing associations, and a range of partner charities and community groups to address these urgent needs and foster long-term sustainability.

By engaging local stakeholders and supporting grassroots initiatives, the fund has ensured that every pound invested delivers maximum social impact. The importance of a flexible, community-led approach, driven by local regional committees has been key to the programme's success.

Journey to Date

As a committed not-for-profit procurement organisation, LHC reinvests surpluses into community benefit initiatives.

The Community Benefit Fund was a key mechanism designed as an extension of LHC's commitment to social responsibility with the aim of getting funds directly to partners who could best support those who needed it most.



Funded projects have supported a wide range of beneficiaries through their community projects including older people, people with disabilities, refugees, young people, families and supporting people into employment. It helped reduce isolation and loneliness, supported vulnerable people during the pandemic, improved confidence and self-esteem amongst young people and improved mental health and well-being.

Each year, funding themes have been adapted to meet local authority priorities, ensuring relevance and effectiveness.

Many projects naturally cut across multiple themes. For instance, an initiative in supporting young people may foster social inclusion by helping individuals connect with others in their area, but may also improve integration and community cohesion, enabling better and cross community relationships. In addition, this can also enhance employability by equipping participants with improved confidence and soft skills needed to access job opportunities.

Partner Collaboration

The success of the LHC London and South East Community Benefit Fund is built on strong collaboration between key partners, each playing a vital role in delivering meaningful community impact.

Our regional committee members and Locality, our current Charity Partner, serve as a crucial link between LHC and the communities we support. Engaging with local community groups and grassroots organisations is essential for ensuring funded projects are relevant and impactful. These partners help identify urgent local needs and facilitate community engagement, ensuring that initiatives are co-designed with the people they serve.

By fostering partnerships across these key groups, the LHC Community Benefit Fund continues to reinforce our shared commitment to social impact.

In recent years the fund has evolved to respond to emerging social challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

However, this period has fostered unprecedented collaboration with the Community Benefit Fund becoming part of a collective effort by 'London Funders' - a group of 350 funders of civil society, acknowledging that beneficiaries may need to be supported differently, and pledging flexibility and assistance to groups affected over this period.

This commitment enabled projects to adapt their approaches, ensuring they could continue supporting communities in need.

Eligibility and Priority Themes

In order to meet these changing needs across our communities not only have funded projects spanned diverse impact areas, supporting individuals from underrepresented backgrounds, marginalised communities, and those facing social or economic hardship, the way in which we identify, fund and measure impact of these projects has also evolved.

Across our regional committee and partners, we identified key impact themes since 2018 and have used these to enable a diverse range of innovative projects to be funded, fostering creativity and collaboration. With outcomes regularly reported back to the Committee, these initiatives have inspired new ideas, partnerships and best practice sharing among members.

Funding Priorities – Responding to the changing needs of our communities

2018-21

- Promoting social inclusion, encouraging independence and developing personal resilience
- Building positive relations between different groups and communities that will maintain the high levels of community cohesion
- Increasing well-being – particularly amongst more disadvantaged communities

2021-22

- Outcomes for young people
- Health inequalities or social prescribing
- Jobs and skills: Increased participation for underrepresented groups

2022-24

- Outcomes for Young People: Anything that supports young people to attain better livelihoods
- Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Social Justice: Work that contributes to further those most marginalised in the community to achieve justice for all

The Role of LHC and Locality

In LHC London and South East we worked closely with our Joint Committee engaging with delivery partners across grant giving cycles, from application to delivery. We developed relationships with those partners ensuring that funding is going to those who need it most creating and maximising our impact.



We have worked with charity partner Locality and drew on local knowledge to jointly identify a range of potential projects, we actively support applications and signpost match funding opportunities to maximise the value of the delivery.

11 Partners

Receiving £420,900
Creating more than
£757,620 of social value

LHC and South East Community Fund Impact

Since 2018, the LHC Community Benefit Fund has supported 74 community projects across London and the South East, awarding a total of £420,900 in funding.

These projects have positively impacted thousands of individuals, addressing key societal challenges such as social inclusion, financial hardship, employability, and health inequalities.

Key Achievements

 £420,900 Grants distributed	 11 Committee member partners	 74 Projects supported	 1000's impacted through direct support and services	 Considerable additional match funding secured	 A significant increase in community well-being and inclusion
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Social Impact in the local communities

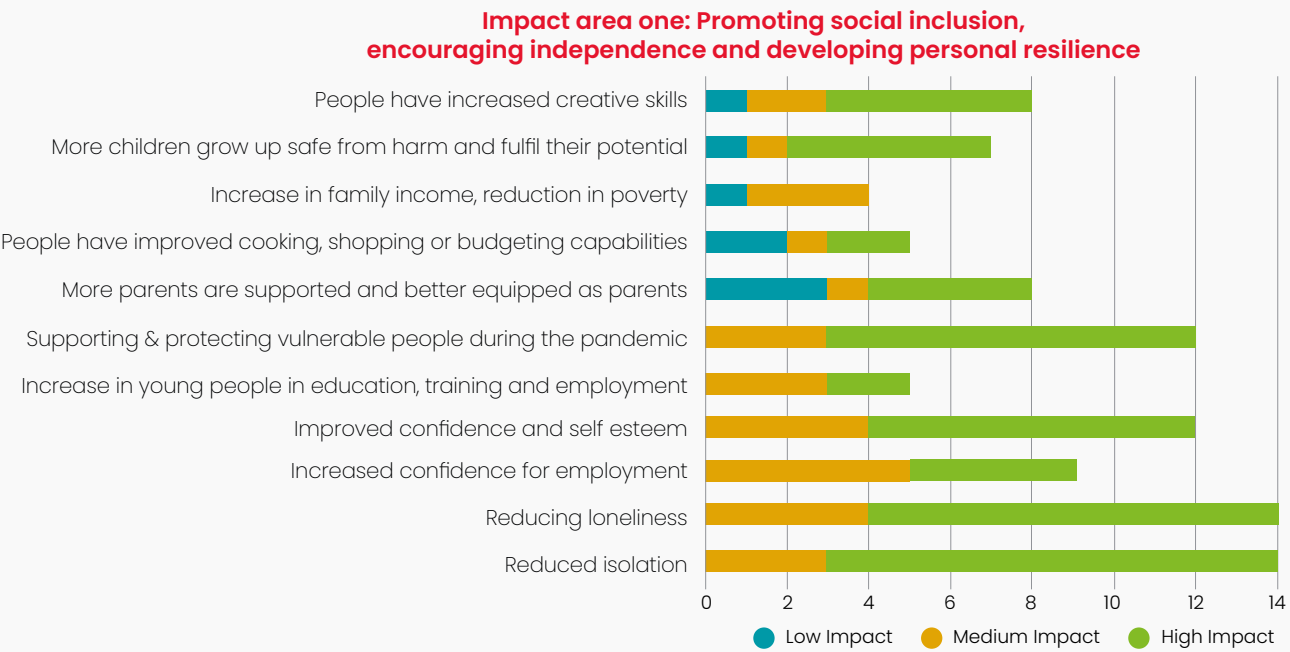
Social value measures the wider outcomes that Community Benefit funded projects bring to individuals and communities, beyond purely financial metrics and inputs.

We recognise that to deliver real social value, understanding the impact for each of our social value areas is key to ensuring we prioritise and support the communities in ways that are needed most. This includes measuring impact at multiple levels; for individuals, communities, and wider society.

As part of monitoring and reporting of the fund, our charity partner, Locality, has carried out a range of engagements to measure the benefits and impact areas that were delivered through the projects. This included surveying grantees to obtain a snapshot of progress split across the following three key outcome areas.

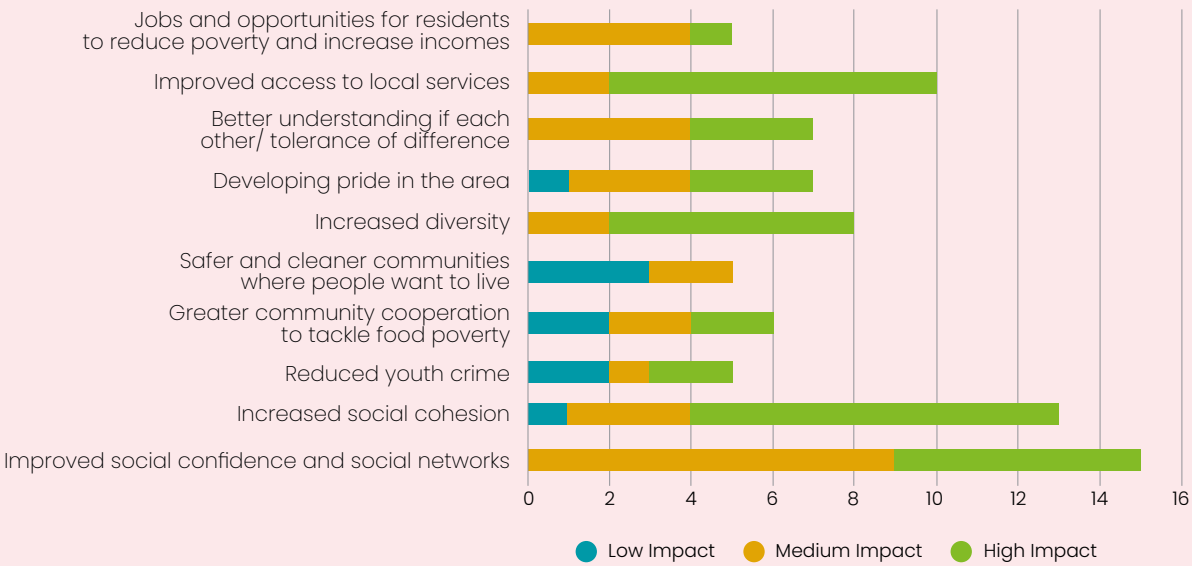
Social Inclusion

The highest impacts were seen in reducing isolation and loneliness, followed by supporting and protecting vulnerable people during the pandemic and improving confidence and self-esteem.



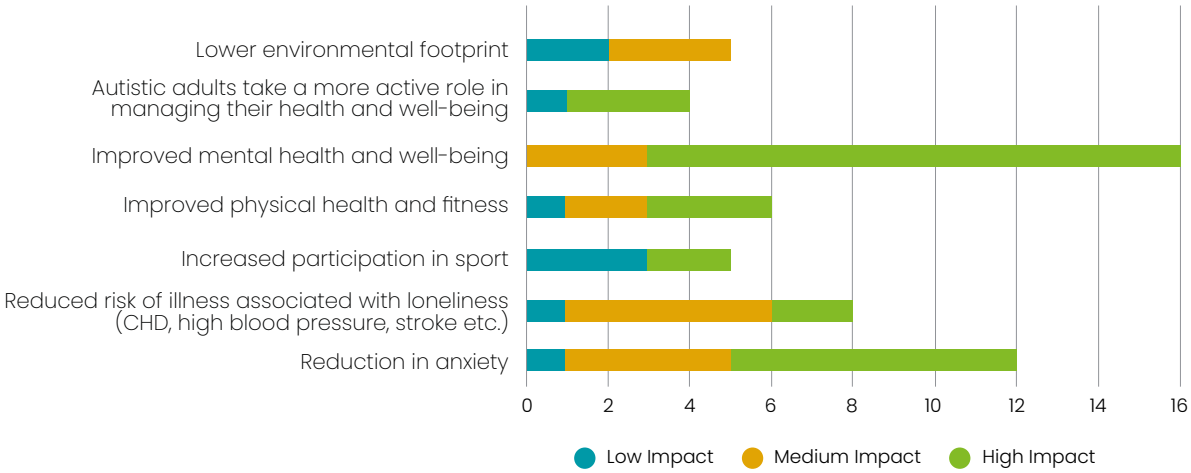
Building Positive Relations

The highest impacts here were seen in increasing social cohesion and improving access to local services, followed by improved confidence, social networks, and increased diversity.



Increasing Well-being

Improved mental health and well-being and a reduction in anxiety were the standout impacts in this area.



This tells us that significant further impact has been created, with measurable outcomes referenced and achieved through the surveys.

Using the available data gathered from the £420,900 financial input from – grant funding to communities – we can currently evidence the following social impact:

Social value to individuals:

£787,604 in well-being improvements



This has been calculated using average well-being uplift on individuals supporting or benefiting from local projects in the community based on the monetary value of materials, funds or volunteering. Given the insights we have of the 74 projects, this is a hugely conservative figure which evidences only a small percentage of the overall impact that has actually been delivered with this funding.

The survey data does, however, provide evidence that indicates greater additional impact, although indicative values only, given these are based on survey responses rather than on all beneficiaries. The values would likely be much higher if more data was available. This suggests social value in the following areas:

Social Inclusion:

£312,325

Building Positive Relations:

£276,941

Increased Well-being:

£550,604

From the evidence outlined, it is clear there is significant impact, with **indicative total social value** of at least **£1,927,474,56** reported. Measuring this against the £420,900 of funding for these projects and against the calculated outcomes of the impact, we can see a significant social return on investment of over 1:5 (£4.58 in created social value for every £1 spent).

Results from 2024 survey

Further surveys of funded projects delivered in 2023/24 also showed the following positive outcomes:



Supporting Families in Crisis: Hackney Playbus



Hackney Playbus provided crucial support to Aiesha, a single mother of two young children living in a homeless hostel in Hackney. Struggling with isolation, depression, and financial hardship, Aiesha was referred to Hackney Playbus by Family Action’s social prescribing team.

Through regular one-to-one telephone support, Hackney Playbus helped Aiesha navigate mental health services, access practical resources such as food and clothing banks, and advocate for better living conditions in the hostel. The team also assisted in securing nursery and school places for her children, reducing the risk of educational disruption.

Despite barriers such as poor internet access, Aiesha and her children participated in online and outdoor play sessions, which helped to build her confidence as a parent and reduce isolation. Over time, Aiesha became more engaged, assertive, and proactive in accessing support, demonstrating significant personal growth.

Impact

- **Enhanced Well-being:** Encouraged Aiesha to access mental health support, improving her resilience.
- **Improved Living Conditions:** Successfully advocated for safer hostel conditions.
- **Education and Stability:** Ensured both children secured appropriate school/nursery placements.
- **Community Connection:** Increased participation in social activities and peer support.

Aiesha now actively engages with support services and expresses gratitude for Hackney Playbus’ ongoing check-ins, showing a positive shift in confidence, parenting skills, and social engagement.

Results: Outcomes Achieved

Ability to obtain **advice** through signposting and support

Increased satisfaction with **maintenance** of property

Improved diet through foodbank referral and cooker repairs

Increased confidence in parenting skills and **improved communication**

Indicative Social Value delivered: £20,875 *

*Calculated using HACT valuations on outcomes above

Empowering Young Women: Get Set Girls



Get Set Girls, a youth group supporting disadvantaged BME girls in North East London, provided one-to-one support and resilience workshops between January and October 2023, funded by the LHC Community Benefit Fund.

This initiative created a safe space where young women could discuss their anxieties, particularly about the Cost-of-Living crisis, and gain practical tools for emotional well-being.

Through flexible one-to-one sessions, members were encouraged to open up about their struggles. Many participants reported a significant reduction in anxiety. In addition, monthly workshops empowered young women by equipping them with emotional regulation techniques and self-leadership skills. Delivered in interactive and creative formats, including group work, skits, and presentations, these sessions helped members take ownership of their growth and confidence. Participants reported an increased ability to manage their mental health.

By building confidence, resilience, and self-awareness, Get Set Girls has transformed the lives of young women, helping them thrive academically, socially, and emotionally while fostering a stronger sense of community engagement

“The workshops were such an amazing idea. I now have the tools to manage my emotions, so that at any time when I have life’s inevitable lows, I have the comfort of knowing that I can manage and that I’ll be ok.”

Impact and Outcomes:



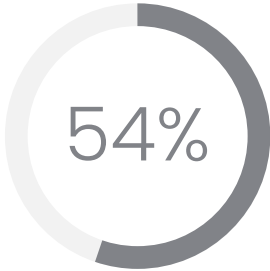
of participants experienced **reduced anxiety** and **improved well-being**.



reported **greater resilience, mental health,** and overall **quality of life**.



increased aspirations for **education, employment,** and **social mobility**.



became more engaged in **volunteering** and **community support**.

What’s next?

As shown in this report, the LHC Community Benefit Fund delivers transformative social impact, creating lasting change for communities across London and the South East. Through strategic funding, strong partnerships, and a commitment to social value, the fund has successfully supported hundreds of projects and thousands of individuals.

Looking ahead, LHC remains committed to investing in community-driven initiatives, ensuring that the fund continues to empower people, strengthen neighbourhoods, and build a fairer society.

LHC’s transition from a central Joint Committee governance structure, to LHC Procurement Group with regional committees, reflects a continued ambition to meet the needs of clients throughout Great Britain. By embedding decision-making closer to communities, the regional committees can better respond to local priorities, strengthen partnerships with stakeholders, and drive more impactful community outcomes.

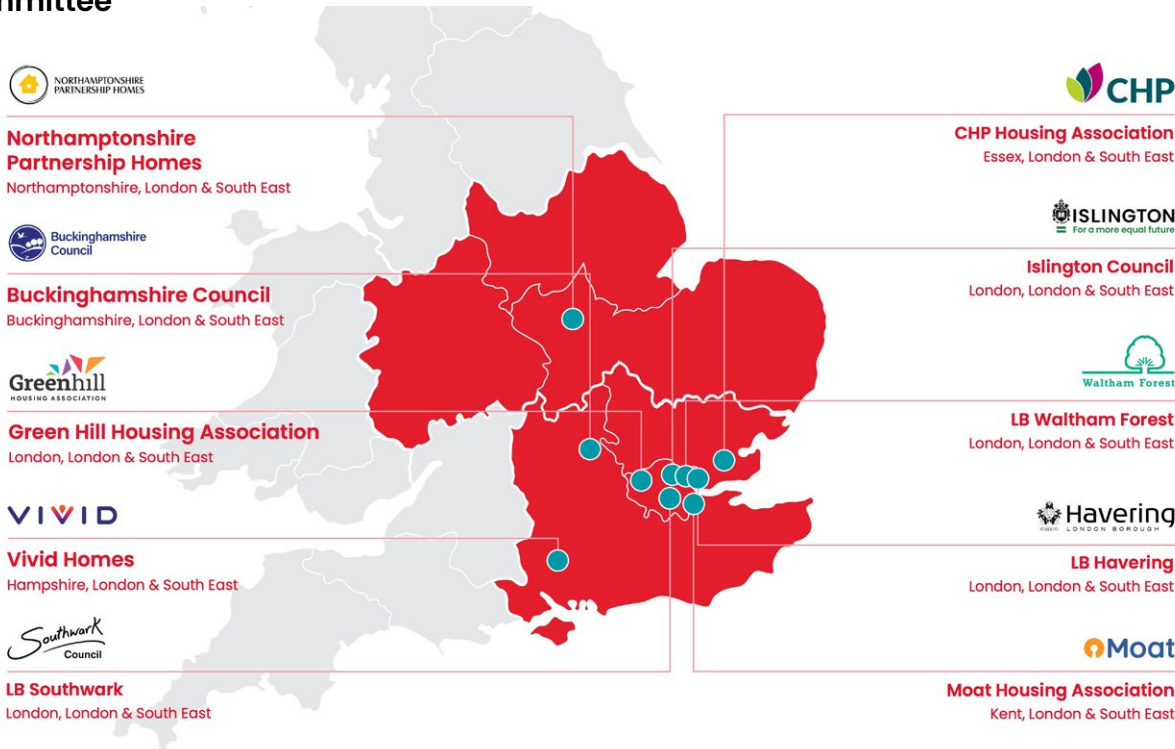
Effort has been made to include organisations of very different types and sizes; from local authorities to small housing co-operatives. The committee also provides an effective route to deliver the Community Benefit Fund. These committees play a crucial role in governance, decision-making, and stakeholder engagement at a local place-based level.

By collaborating across our regional teams we are committed to improving lives and places in all areas of Great Britain. LHC Midlands, London and South East regional committee is now made up of housing and public sector organisations (as illustrated below) who advise on upcoming sector needs, provide direction with regards to upcoming priorities and provide valuable feedback about services.

In 2024/25 we have funded projects for all current regional partners in Midlands, London and the South East and will report on the impact once they have been delivered in the forthcoming year.

As we move towards 2026/27 LHC Procurement Group continues to share surplus funds with members through our Committee Benefit Fund. This will increase the money going into impactful, community-led projects reflecting LHC’s commitment to generating greater social value.

Regional Committee





**Improving lives and places
through quality procurement solutions**

For more information about the LHC Community Benefit Fund and its future plans, please visit:
lse.lhcprocure.org.uk/who-we-work-with/community-benefits/ or contact our
Group Social Value Manager at **Michael.McLaughlin@lhcprocure.org.uk**

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