

PLACE FOR ALL

*Partnership working
for a more equal
and inclusive
Lambeth*

18
MONTH
REVIEW 2019
2020

PLACE FOR ALL

A LAMBETH-BASED PARTNERSHIP



>60 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Launched in January 2019, our partnership supports socially and financially excluded adults, with a focus on women, lone parents, over 50s, and BAME and Latin American communities.

Through partnership working, we seek to create a more equal and inclusive Lambeth, supported by a strong Voluntary and Community Sector.



*Together, we are
significantly stronger.*

The process has been stressful and scary. If the employment support worker hadn't joined me in the last redundancy meeting as my representative, I don't think they would have changed their attitude with me.



Baytree



High Trees



IRMO

Education ● ● ●

English, ICT, Math, and Financial Management courses to **develop skills for life and work**

Employment ● ●

- One-to-one employment advice to help people **secure jobs, increase their earnings, and progress into better jobs**
- Weekly Jobs Clubs
- Courses to **secure the CSCS card** to work in the Construction industry

Advice ●

- One-to-one advice on benefits, housing, pensions, debt, and tax
- Workshops to **increase awareness of rights and entitlements**

Mentoring ●

One-to-one social mobility mentoring to **help women achieve their aspirations** across 5 pillars: Education, Employment, Financial Management, Family Stability, and Wellbeing

Wellbeing and Family Stability ●

Activities to **improve wellbeing, help families have happy and stable homes, and help people feel more integrated in their communities**

Community Organising ●

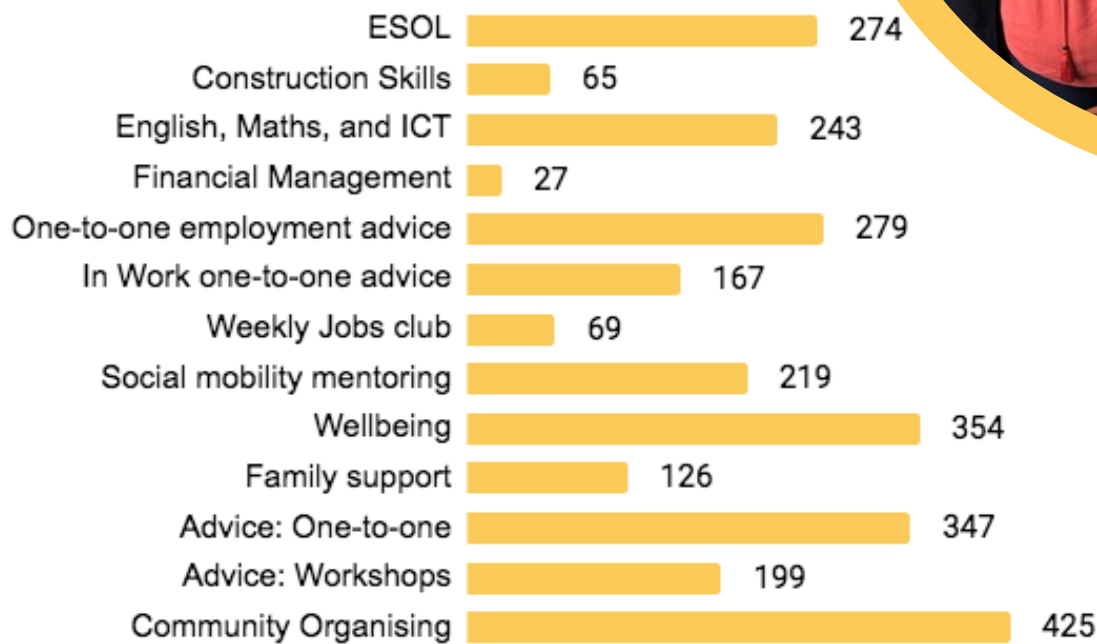
Training, capacity building, and events to **empower people to collectively tackle issues in their community**

OUR SERVICES



OUR IMPACT

2164 PEOPLE SUPPORTED

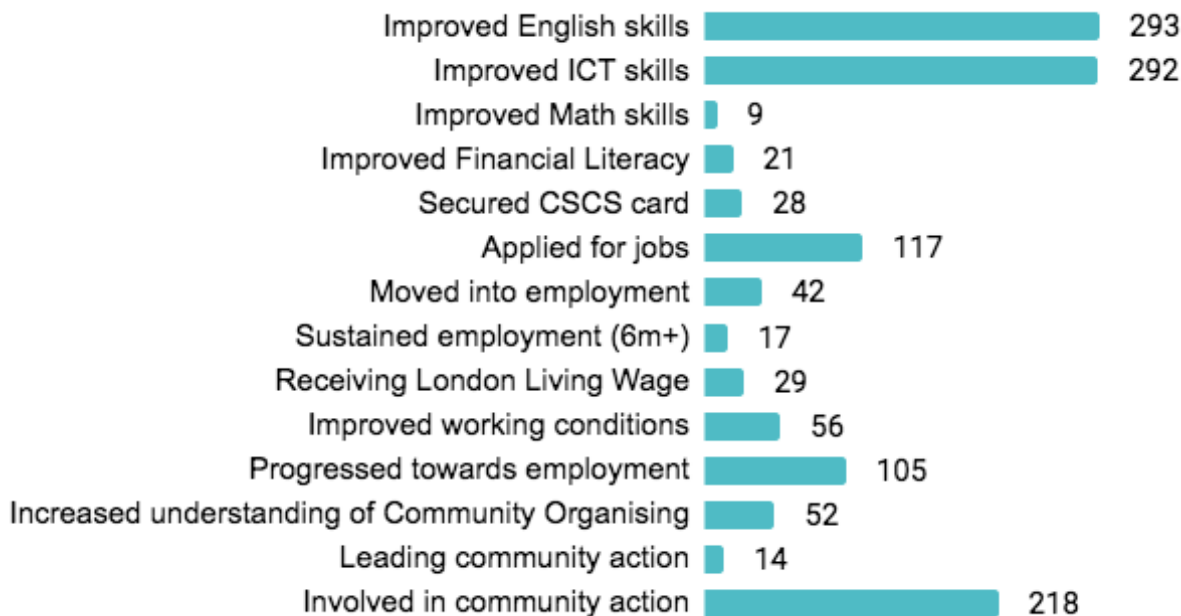


*We
have
all had to
put in a huge
amount of graft to*

*change and adapt our services and work as
a team. We have done exceptionally well at
responding to Covid-19 and I feel we can be
very proud of what we have done together.*

OUR IMPACT

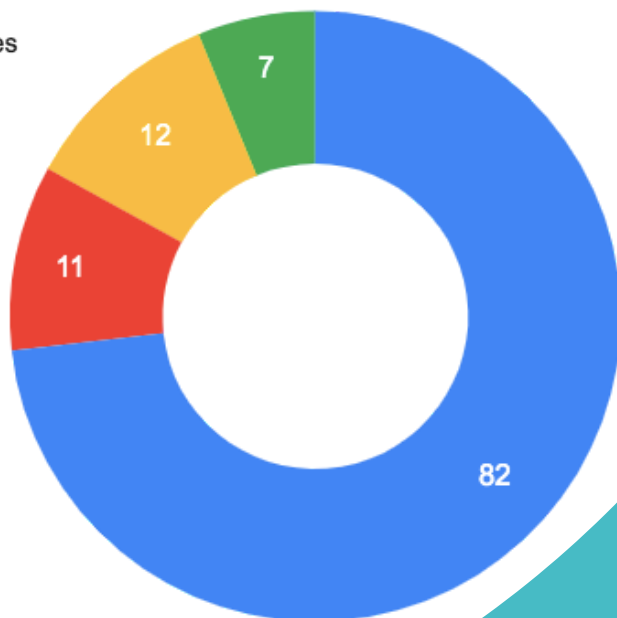
1616 OUTCOMES ACHIEVED



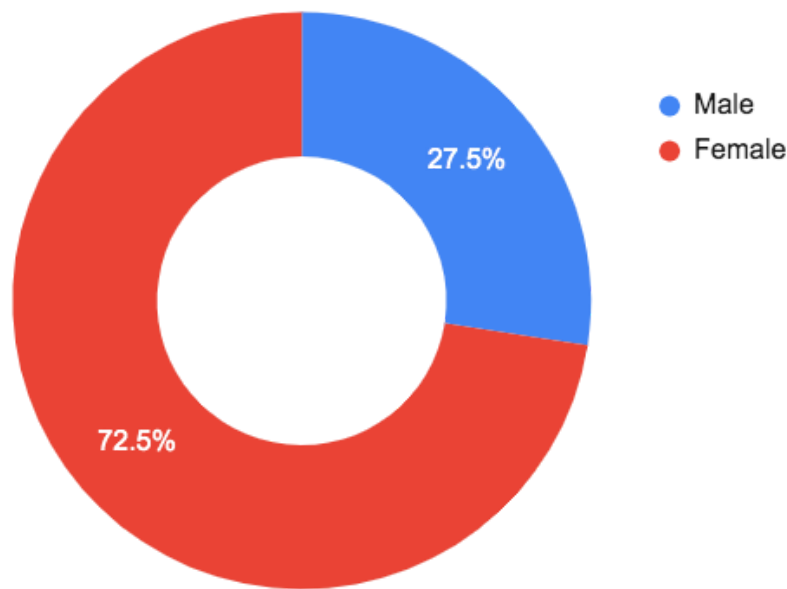
*Please note that a few outcomes have not yet been measured for people supported in 2020.

112 PEOPLE ACCESSING MULTIPLE ORGANISATIONS

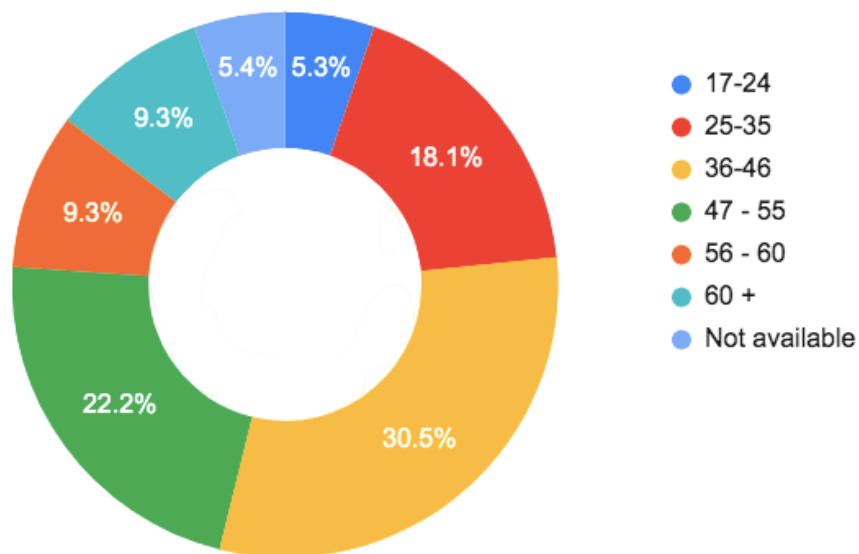
- Baytree-High Trees
- Baytree-IRMO
- High Trees-IRMO
- All



**73%
Women**

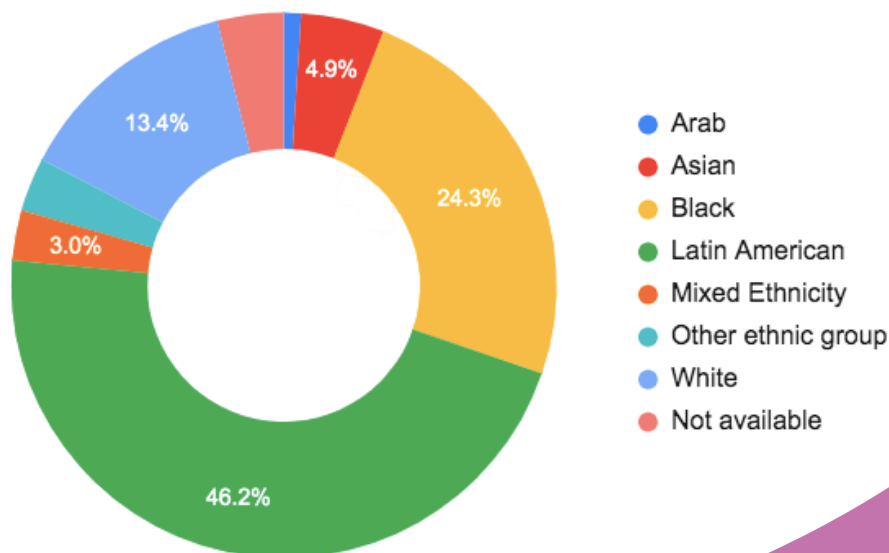


**76%
Age 17-55**



**19%
Age 55+**

**83%
BAME**



**WHO WE
SUPPORTED**

OUR SUCCESSSES

I have noticed a stronger collaboration within the partnership, which I hope we will have after the crisis as well.

Strengthening of our partnership

Over the last 12 months, our partnership strengthened as staff built relationships and saw how working in collaboration enabled them to achieve more and better support their users.



Our first partnership workshop in June 2019

Our 6-weekly partnership meetings, workshops, and informal get togethers brought staff together to learn about each other's work and expertise, as well as share information, resources, and contacts. Covid-19 was a true test of our partnership and we are proud of our staff for working more closely, sharing and learning from each other, and actively signposting and referring users during the crisis.

Joint initiatives

Since the launch of Place For All, our teams successfully delivered joint initiatives, including some of the following:



Baytree and High Trees working together to offer ICT and Financial Management courses to women at Baytree

High Trees providing one-to-one employment support and Weekly Jobs Club at Baytree



IRMO delivering EU Settlement Scheme support at Baytree and High Trees

All partners working together on a Black History Month travelling photo exhibition centred on the migration stories of users



High Trees and IRMO working together to run a 'Space to Think' event on the challenges Latin American migrants face

Staff development

As a partnership, we pooled our resources and more effectively invested in the development of our staff. Over the last 18 months



12 staff became Mental Health First Aiders and 8 became Champions

14 staff developed effective coaching skills



14 staff learnt or developed project management skills

All staff received training on Views, our common Monitoring & Evaluation platform

Benefits to our users

By working collectively, the people we support easily access the full range of services available to them. Over the last 18 months, 112 people accessed the services of at least 2 organisations (and oftentimes multiple services within 1 organisation). We also set up our partnership User Steering Group in November, made up of users across our 3 organisations, to ensure that the people we support have a say in shaping our services and partnership.

Covid-19

Covid-19 changed the needs of our users and posed challenges to how we delivered services and continued to support our users. Our teams responded by adapting services and also extended extra support (e.g. referrals, signposting, acting on behalf of users) and provided new services (e.g. wellbeing check-ins and loaning out laptops and dongles) to address urgent needs and barriers to information and services. Across the partnership, we are proud of our success in continuing to support and engage users, particularly our agile response to Covid-19, effectively adapting services for remote delivery, keeping in regular contact with users, being responsive to users' diverse needs during the crisis, and being innovative with our offering and how we recruited and engaged users.



I'm personally very glad to be part of this. It's a great opportunity for me to grow professionally – with other professional people from different backgrounds. It's very inspiring. It's a good model.

OUR SUCCESSES

OUR CHALLENGES

We are all so overwhelmed with myriad obligations.

When one is overwhelmed, you are not listening and reflecting as you don't have capacity.

Limited staff capacity

Working together as a partnership does not come without its challenges. While our organisations and staff share similar values, we have found that limited capacity has been a barrier to actively engaging with the partnership. Directors, managers, and frontline staff have responsibilities to funders, users, and colleagues and often these can take priority over partnership activity, though we have seen this change over the last year as staff bought into the partnership. What this means is that partnership activity and development can take some time to progress, especially when many people are involved and we take an inclusive approach to partnership working.

Communication

In a partnership where the people involved come with different expertise and points of view, communication can be a challenge, especially in a changing environment and remote working the norm (i.e. Covid-19). We have found that creating mechanisms and spaces for information sharing and relationship building - regular meetings with staff updates, a central space to share documents, a partnership email group and an internal partnership newsletter - has been critical to us overcoming this hurdle.

Joint initiatives

When teams work together for the first time, differences in working styles and constraints create some initial challenges. As our teams have now worked together on multiple initiatives, they know and understand how each other works and we expect to develop more joint initiatives over the next 12 months.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

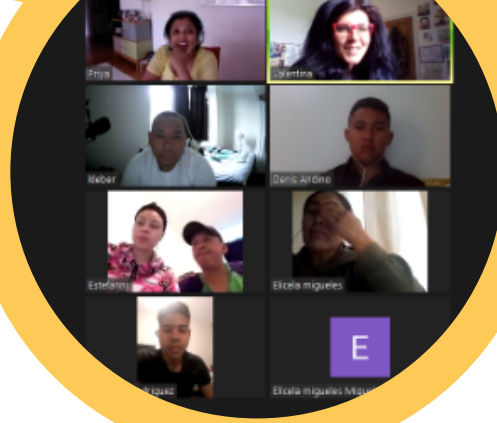
While great strides have been made in our M&E as a partnership, we have had to invest significant time and resources to do so and ensure that all staff were involved in the process. Besides appointing an external evaluator (NCVO), we ran a participatory Theory of Change (TOC) workshop to review and refine our TOC. Over the course of the last 6 months, we consulted with all staff to finalise our TOC, refine the tools to measure outcomes, and standardise the collection of user data. In parallel, IRMO also onboarded Views so that now all staff across our partnership use the same M&E platform. Still, there are opportunities for us to improve how we track the work we do, the people we support, and the progress that they make.



Covid-19

Covid-19 changed the needs of our users and our frontline staff experienced an influx of demand for support on food, benefits, housing, employment, mental health and domestic violence. For a number of teams, demand exceeded capacity and staff workloads increased significantly during Covid-19. Small teams and those experiencing staff changes faced additional pressure. As organisations across the charity sector were overloaded by demand, staff also faced challenges in referring users to similar or other services.

In response to Covid-19, teams had to adapt and deliver services remotely, and faced challenges in: developing new systems and processes and communicating them to staff and the wider partnership; supporting staff to adapt to new systems, processes, and technology; resolving technical issues; supporting users to access services remotely; communicating with users and reaching new users; engaging and retaining users; gathering documentation and signatures from users. Covid-19 brought to the fore the issue of digital exclusion and while we did everything we could, some of our users could not continue to be supported.



Remote working and remote delivery were barriers to effective communication between colleagues and with users. While we remedied this internally through more regular communication, remote delivery still remains more time consuming than face-to-face delivery, especially when acting on behalf of users or working with users who have limited IT skills.

Looking further ahead, our challenge as a partnership is facing the long-term implications of Covid-19, particularly its pressure on our already vulnerable users, the increase in demand for our services, and the need for more sustainable funding and solutions. We also have an obligation to embed within our existing offering the new services we have launched in response to Covid-19 and ensure they are adequately resourced to support user demand.

It definitely feels more intense, time-sensitive and ever-changing. I often feel guilty if I know I have missed a call from a beneficiary on my day off because it could have been urgent.

OUR CHALLENGES

LESSONS LEARNT

Partnership working

From the last 18 months of working together, we've learnt that successful partnership working is supported by:

PLACE FOR ALL

- 1 Organisations and staff having a common mission**
To create a more equal and inclusive Lambeth
- 2 Clear and regular communication**
Meetings, internal newsletter, shared email group, shared drive
- 3 Neutral and dedicated partnership support**
Partnership coordinator, joint M&E officer
- 4 Opportunities for relationship building**
Meetings, joint initiatives, joint training, informal get togethers
- 5 Staff having a sense of ownership and say**
Involving staff from the start, being inclusive and transparent, regular opportunities for reflection and feedback
- 6 Planning far ahead with respect to partnership activity and development**
3-4 months notice, email/calendar reminders, regular progress updates



Covid-19

While Covid-19 has been a huge challenge for our organisations, staff, and users this year, we have also learnt:

- 1** The value of remote delivery and the benefits it offers in terms of convenience and savings on time and money with respect to travel and childcare
- 2** The importance of IT and the opportunity to integrate that across adult learning to improve IT skills and address digital exclusion
- 3** The need to be ahead in terms of knowledge on users' needs and skills to support those needs
- 4** The value of working with all members of the family so that more users access and engage with services

It was based on trust, mutual respect for each other's services and staff because we had learnt we have the same values.

I think the key at all levels is to keep communicating, be understanding, listen, act, and reflect, support where possible, and work hard. I feel we have been doing this consistently and we just need to keep it up.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the remaining half of 2020, teams will be planning for the re-opening of centres and the safe delivery of services. For most services, this will be a combination of remote delivery and face-to-face delivery to ensure the safety of users and the engagement of more vulnerable users who experience challenges accessing remote delivery. For a few services where remote delivery has worked well and adequate space for social distancing may be an issue, they will continue to be delivered remotely until later in the year.

To address the high demand for welfare and employment support as a partnership, we will invest in developing our staff's knowledge across multiple areas (including benefits, employment rights, immigration, and no recourse to public funds), as well as explore more integration on welfare support, in particular a system of triaging so that Baytree and High Trees focuses on supporting relatively simple cases and referring more complex cases to IRMO.

To take our partnership to the next level, we will build on the foundation we have and create more opportunities for sharing and learning between organisations and staff, such as a peer support group to remain informed about changes to employment rights and an end-of-year reflection workshop. We will also look at increasing the visibility of the partnership to our users and other stakeholders and sharing our experiences and learnings as a partnership.

Recognising that staff have faced immense pressure from Covid-19, we will explore ways to invest in staff welfare and embed it as part of our organisation and partnership culture.



SUCCESS STORIES

Thank you for all you are doing for me. I would have been lost without you and unable to understand the guidelines and access food vouchers. You have helped my children too as we can now study on the new laptop and not have to worry about missing homework. I can also study my course and attend classes to complete my qualification.

During the Covid-19 lockdown, R was supported by the Education & Training team with weekly calls and a laptop to attend online classes. She successfully achieved her qualification this Summer and has been referred to the Employment & Careers team for employment support.



P had been out of work since 2018 following redundancy and her primary goal was to return to work in children and family services. Working with her employment adviser, she developed an action plan, updated her CV, and accessed local community resources. During the lockdown, her home computer stopped working and within days of applying, she received a laptop on long-term loan from High Trees, which enabled her family to access online school provision, Universal Credit, and job search. P is now more confident about her future job prospects.

For me, Baytree's service is the best of the best! They helped me with food vouchers, contacting my work, with school letters and my daughter's homework, English classes for my daughter and since we arrived in London. I love Baytree's work. Thank you so much for all your support!

When Covid-19 hit London, HF's family were badly hit financially. When her ESOL teacher reached out to her to check on her wellbeing, she admitted that she was struggling and the ESOL Programme Coordinator passed on her case to a coach in April. After understanding HF's situation, the coach immediately decided to apply for the Lambeth Emergency Coronavirus Aid for her. At the end of April, HF received a positive outcome on the application, awarding her with emergency funding to pay her household expenses. With help from the coach, HF also accessed the food bank and the Baytree Family Fund to cover her June utility bills.

V has been part of Step Up since mid 2019 and has also been attending ESOL classes at Baytree. Throughout the Covid-19 crisis, she was supported by IRMO with updates on Covid-19 and resources to access help on accessing benefits and to enrol in online courses. In March, she was placed on furlough and her adviser helped her to understand the scheme and how much she should receive from her employer. She was also offered a few work opportunities and invited to an interview for a caring role. Unfortunately, fear of contracting the virus prevented her from taking these roles. In July, her company invited her back but within a redundancy consultation process. With support from her adviser, she was able to negotiate and be allocated cleaning jobs closer to London, where she lives.

A Baytree and IRMO user, B had her Universal Credit payments reduced and she was not able to pay rent for 2 months. After 2 sessions in May, IRMO's welfare adviser found that the council had not considered information she had provided in regard to her children. With support from her adviser, B submitted her documents and was successful in resolving her situation and received 2 months of backdated payments to cover her rent in arrears.

The process has been stressful and scary. If the employment support worker hadn't joined me in the last redundancy meeting as my representative, I don't think they would have changed their attitude with me. They were all the same before that meeting. But when she attended they changed their attitude and afterwards, I was provided with closer jobs in London in one of the offices here.

High Trees has helped me to study English online by providing me with a tablet so that I do not have to worry about missing classes, not studying or learning.

When IRMO got in touch with L, she was having trouble paying her rent and buying food. With IRMO's support, she was able to re-negotiate her rent with the landlady and achieve a reduction, as well as receive 3 food parcels from a local food bank. L was also referred to the welfare advice service and she submitted an application for Universal Credit, receiving her first payment after 3 months.



We received the TV and the first time my children saw it in the living room, the joy on their faces I cannot describe. We also received the books, the toys, clothes, kitchen items, and also the laptop. We have had the best sleep ever with the bed and bedding. Me and my children are happy and safe.

When courses were suspended due to Covid-19, B found herself unable to connect with others and to study English due to lack of access to any devices or internet connection at home. With support from High Trees, B received a device and a dongle with internet connection and has been able to join weekly ESOL classes with her teacher, meet new ESOL learners and even join sessions with her little baby. B also received a range of English books for babies and toddlers from High Trees to be able to learn new words and read together with her child.



SUCCESS STORIES

FOLLOW OUR WORK

PARTNERSHIP

PLACE
FOR **ALL**



@place4all_



@placeforall

PARTNERS



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