

HIGH TREES IMPACT REPORT

September 2020 -
August 2021



INTRODUCTION TO HIGH TREES

High Trees is a well-regarded and trusted community organisation and charity based in Tulse Hill, in the London Borough of Lambeth. Our work focuses on delivering a range of integrated services to connect people and communities to strengthen skills and build stronger voices.

High Trees' work is underpinned by an understanding that the individuals and communities in our local area face multiple long-standing structural disadvantages and inequalities which impact on the life of our service users in numerous ways including education levels, employment rates, living conditions, financial security and health and wellbeing.



30%
of people in Lambeth live in poverty ¹

In addition to high levels of deprivation, Lambeth has also been identified as having the highest levels of ethnic inequality in London. Inequality is experienced in education, employment, housing, and health. ²

Many individuals and communities are also under-represented and disenfranchised in decision making over issues that affect their lives. Our work seeks to achieve impactful, systemic change by supporting individuals and communities to lead local change.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE

- 1.** Improved life conditions/prospects for individuals & communities
- 2.** Improved wellbeing of individuals & communities, with raised aspirations
- 3.** More connected individuals & communities working together
- 4.** Stronger voice and ability to influence change among communities and VCS organisations
- 5.** A stronger, more connected, and collaborative VCS

Letter from Co-CEOs

2020 – 2021 has been another huge year for High Trees, the demand for our services has continued to grow against the backdrop of lockdowns and their aftermath and the needs of our users has risen in terms of scope and complexity. Against the most difficult of backdrops there have been success stories – our services have changed and adapted to meet community need, our staff base has grown allowing us to increase our reach and most importantly people who use our services have succeeded in making the changes in their lives they sought – gaining skills, employment, qualifications and increased confidence and self-belief. You will read some of their stories in this report.

We know that our organisational success, is our staffs' success, and none of the work we do would be possible without their passion, dedication and the phenomenal range of skills they contribute. The work we do has always been challenging and at times difficult, but this year we owe our staff an extra thanks – they not only worked tirelessly and at record speed during lockdown to transfer all our services to remote delivery, while setting up new services to meet emerging need – but in many cases did so while juggling home schooling their children, caring for vulnerable family members and facing the lockdown restrictions we all shared (we owe a special thanks to the children who put up with this too!). We have never been prouder of High Trees, our staff, our service users, and what we have collectively achieved.

This report gives an overview of our work over the year, why we do the work we do and the impact we have had. Whether you are someone who uses High Trees, one of our funders or partners or someone who is seeking to learn more – thank you for your interest and support – we know that our achievements are thanks to you all.

Anna Coffey and Grace English (High Trees Co-CEO's)



Anna and Grace, with their families

HOW WE ACHIEVE CHANGE

High Trees provides an integrated service offer, designed to tackle different needs – open to all but targeted towards those who need us most. Our interlinked service areas are:



COMMUNITY EDUCATION & TRAINING

We specialise in delivering adult education in community settings to provide individuals with the skills they need for work and life. These include ESOL, English & Maths Functional Skills, Community Organising, ICT, Vocational courses and employment preparation.



EMPLOYMENT & CAREERS SUPPORT

We provide person-centered employment support for Lambeth priority groups including young adults aged 18-30, those aged 50+ and individuals with long-term health conditions to improve their economic position through sustainable employment opportunities and career progression.



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY SERVICES

We work on the basis of early intervention and deliver a range of services from Tulse Hill Adventure Playground for 8-16 year olds focused on play, study and social action. We also deliver coaching in local secondary schools and a young leaders programme for young people aged 16-19 providing paid work experience and employment support. All our work aims to improve the aspirations and wellbeing of children and young people.



COMMUNITY ACTION

We support individuals and community groups to develop advocacy skills and empower them to take collective community action on issues that affect them, whilst also improving representation in decision making. We do this through listening campaigns, supporting local groups, 1:1 support and community organising training.



PARTNERSHIPS

We develop and grow local partnerships of community organisations, creating joined up strategies to respond to the challenges faced by the communities we support. Our current partnerships focus on tackling youth violence, improving community spaces and supporting individuals facing multiple disadvantages.



Jose's Journey

An important part of the High Trees integrated service offer is that individuals and their families can access more than one of our services easily. From September 2020 – August 2021, 54% of adults accessed more than one course or service with us.



This is Jose

Jose is referred to High Trees from the Job Centre to gain help improving his English.



Begins ESOL Classes

He enrolls on an ESOL beginners course and attends a weekly conversation club to help him improve his English.



He starts to feel more confident and decides to do an ICT course

Gains Accredited Qualifications

After studying hard, he is able to gain accreditations in English and ICT Functional Skills



Jose explains to his ICT tutor he feels ready for a full time job



Gets 1:1 Employment Support

Jose needs some help with his job search so his tutor refers him to a High Trees Employment Advisor



Jose is supported to create a CV, write applications and learn interview skills. He soon secures a job.

Got involved in Community Organising

Jose is having problems with housing, his Employment Advisor refers him to the Community Action team to attend training in Community Organising



Jose meets neighbours who are also facing similar problems and they discuss how to take action



Jose's children attend the Adventure Playground

Jose learns about the Adventure Playground and takes his two children. His 17-year-old has an interest in youth work and signs up to be a young leader

HIGH TREES IMPACT

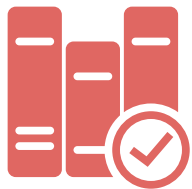
Our services are open to all but targeted towards those most in need.



1262

young people and adults were supported by High Trees this year

During September 2020 - August 2021, High Trees worked intensively with 874 people through our Employment and Welfare, Education and Training and Children, Young People and Family activities. We supported an additional 40 community leaders with mentoring and capacity building sessions. We reached a further 348 individuals through our Community Action work through listening campaigns and outreach activities.



54% of adults accessed more than one course or service with us.

OUR IMPACT IS TARGETED AND LOCAL



75%

of those we work with live in Lambeth



40%

of our participants live in central Brixton wards (Tulse Hill, Herne Hill, Coldharbour, Brixton Hill & Ferndale)

WE AIM TO REACH THOSE MOST DISADVANTAGED BY STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY

This year, of the adults we worked with:



74%

were in receipt of benefits



65%

were unemployed at the start of engagement with us



81%

were from a Minority Ethnic Background



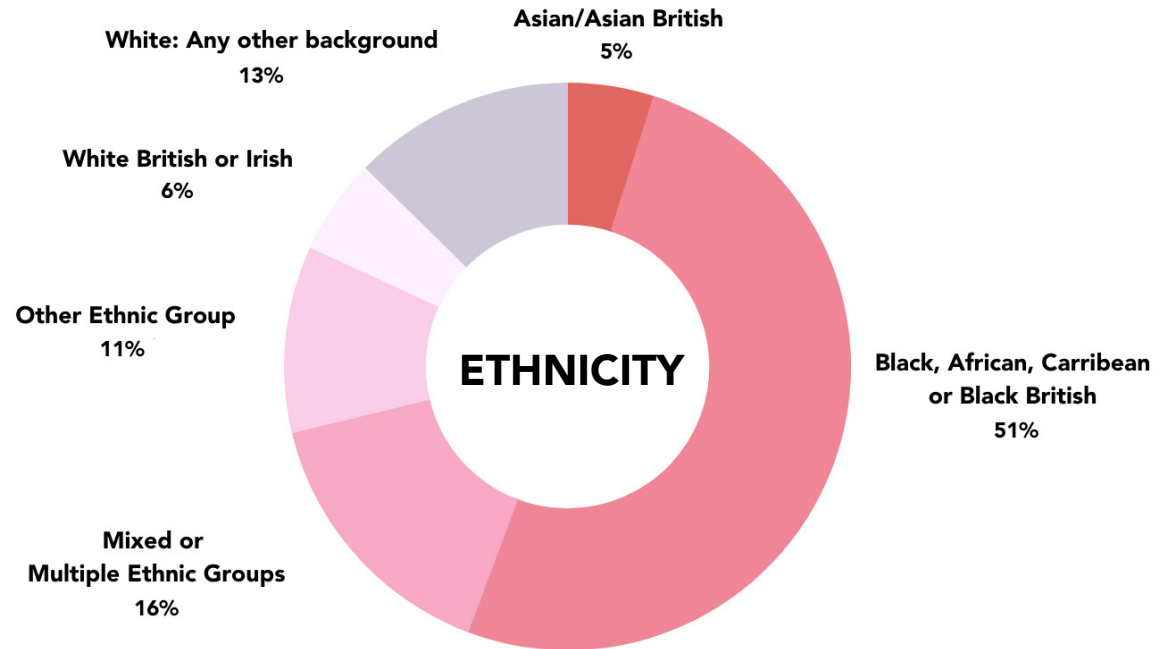
69%

were female

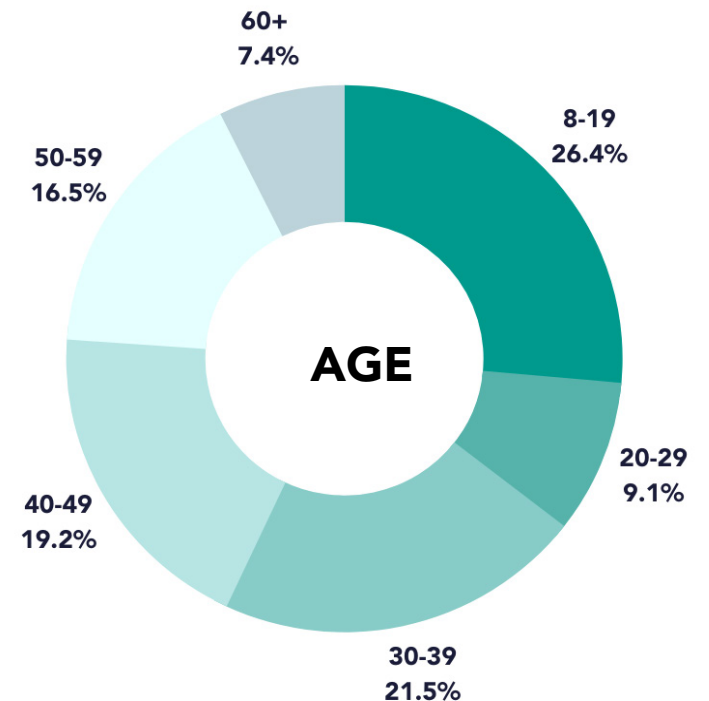
HIGH TREES SERVICE USER DEMOGRAPHICS

This year 81% of our users reported coming from a Minority Ethnic Background. 51% users came from a Black, African, Caribbean or Black British Background and 16% came from a mixed or multiple ethnic group background. A further 5% of our users were Asian, 6% White British, 13% from Other White Backgrounds and 11% from 'Other Ethnic Group'.

We worked with individuals from the age of 8 to 87. Around a quarter of our users were under 19, accessing our services for Children, Young People, and Families. Just over 20% of our adult service users were aged 30-39 and a further 19% were aged 40-49. 24% of our users were over 50, primarily accessing our broad community education and training provision.



SEX





COVID Response March 2020 - March 2021

On the announcement of the first lockdown in March 2020, High Trees worked quickly to transfer all services to remote delivery and by mid-April all our services were available to our existing and new users as remote support. Engagement with our services during all lockdowns remained extraordinarily high, with many of our past beneficiaries' re-engaging and new beneficiaries accessing our services. In addition to moving our existing services online, we also developed two new areas of support in response to the pandemic:



DISTRIBUTED 190 DEVICES TO TACKLE DIGITAL EXCLUSION

During the pandemic, High Trees identified that one of the biggest issues affecting service users was digital exclusion. Residents of Tulse Hill were struggling to access the help they needed with increasingly more services and support going online. High Trees created two services to respond to this need - the Connecting Tulse Hill Partnership (CTH) and the Digital Hub.

The Connecting Tulse Hill Partnership was led by High Trees and brought together local partners including primary schools, tenants and residents' associations and local Councillors to provide digitally excluded households with laptops or digital devices and/or mobile Wi-Fi data so that they could stay connected to vital services during the pandemic.

During the second national lockdown the High Trees Community Action team continued to support service users affected by digital exclusion by opening a covid-safe Digital Hub, allowing onsite access to computers and the internet.



219 BENEFICIARIES ACCESSED WELLBEING SUPPORT CHECK-INS

Supported by the Walcot Foundation, Barclays and Impact on Urban Health, High Trees set-up and ran a Wellbeing and Referral Service for residents to provide wellbeing support, to provide up-to-date information regarding finances, employment, and housing and to ensure residents were aware of the resources and services available to them locally. The overall aim of the service was to ensure that people were still able to access the services they needed throughout lockdown including access to:

- Foodbank vouchers
- Specialised support services
- Regular one-to-one wellbeing calls
- New and existing support services



User Voices

“ 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 ” - Connecting Tulse Hill Service User

“ It has just given me an overall boost in wellbeing to know that I can chat to someone for half an hour each week about what has been going on in the news and locally and that if I need something urgently, someone from High Trees would do their best to help. It's made a real difference, especially whilst I had to stay at home ” - Wellbeing Service User





SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS INTO EMPLOYMENT

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT

- Only 69% of working age Lambeth residents from a Minority Ethnic Background were employed in 2020, compared to 81% working age Lambeth residents from a White Background ³
- 10% of the working age population in Tulse Hill were claimants of unemployment benefits in June 2021, almost double the average in England ⁴

WHAT WE OFFER

High Trees offer bespoke one to one employment support with experienced advisors who are experts in helping those with multiple barriers. We offer tailored sessions as well as extra support brushing up on CVs, upskilling to meet current demands or identifying potential vacancies.

In 2020, we continued to support those who had lost employment due to Covid-19 and provide them with routes to alternative, sustainable jobs. In 2021 we developed partnerships with local employers to run Pre-Employment Training courses in transport and care industries.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR



125 individuals were supported through one-to-one employment support and our jobs club



43 individuals were successful in gaining employment



70% of individuals reported increased job readiness



SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS INTO EMPLOYMENT

Jane's Story*

Jane had worked in various warehouses for over 20 years until she left her job in May 2021. She wanted to go back to work but had very limited IT skills and she needed help to look and applying for jobs.

Following an initial assessment, a High Trees Employment Advisor supported Jane to develop two different CVs to demonstrate her experience chronologically and to better highlight her abilities. The following one to one session focused on how to create accounts on job search websites and use resources such as 'Learn My Way' to build confidence applying for jobs online.

Jane was also referred to the High Trees Education and Training Team who run free accredited ICT courses every term. Jane's Employment Advisor also helped her to create a profile on LinkedIn and showed her how to use it to look for jobs and to link up with her previous colleagues. In one of their sessions, Jane told her advisor that she as also an artist and that she had exhibited her work in the UK and in the USA. Her advisor then supported her to create a CV that focused on her experience as an artist, with information about her past exhibitions, publications, and studies.

After few more sessions together, Jane started feeling more confident to apply for jobs by herself and she was soon invited for some interviews. After a number of interviews, Jane secured a job working in the warehouse of one of the most important museums in London.



*All names have been changed.



INCREASING EDUCATION AND SKILLS

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT

- 15% of working age people in Tulse Hill have no qualifications. ⁵
- 11% of households in Tulse Hill have no household members speaking English as their main language. ⁶

WHAT WE OFFER

High Trees run a wide-ranging education and training programme for adults aged 19 and above. Our offer of accredited and non-accredited courses ranges from basic skills for everyday life and employment and includes ICT, Maths and English Functional Skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages, vocational courses, Family Learning, Art and Wellbeing and Community Organising courses. We tailor all our training so that it meets the needs of each individual and is delivered in a supportive environment.

This year, we continued to deliver courses online and face to face in response to Covid-19 restrictions. Despite the potential disruption, we were able to reach our highest ever number of learners and maintain the quality of our provision. High Trees was recognised as an Outstanding provider by Lambeth Council in October 2021.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR

72 courses held overall

524 learners

31% of individuals did multiple courses



127 learners completed accredited training and gained a qualification.
74 learners gained more than one accreditation.



83% of our learners progressed onto further education, paid employment or volunteering



100% of learners stated that sessions were well planned and met their needs, that they felt challenged, and that the course met their expectations



Adama's Story*

Adama joined one of our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) online courses in January 2021. Originally from Sierra Leone, she had lived in Italy for over 15 years where she trained and later worked as a care assistant in a care home. When she started the course, she had only been in the U.K. for 10 months and was determined to improve her English and find a job, preferably working for the NHS.

A highly motivated learner, Adama attended every class, was very active in class discussions and supported the less confident learners in the class. In addition to her ESOL classes, she also studied English on her own every day.

In April 2021, Adama applied for the position of care assistant at Lewisham Hospital. Her ESOL tutor helped her to prepare for her job interview by discussing some questions that could come up during the interview. The interview went very well and Adama was offered a full-time position at the hospital. She now works full-time and continues to study English.

*All names have been changed.





SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT

- The right to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and play is recognised to make a crucial contribution to a child's physical, mental, emotional and social development. Poverty can impact on the resources that children and young people have available to play ⁷
- 25% of children aged 0-19 in Tulse Hill are in relatively low-income families compared with 19% across England ⁸
- Only 17% of the physical area of Tulse Hill is open space, compared to 39% for London as a whole. The Tulse Hill Adventure Playground is located in an area of high-density social housing which is typically made up of high-rise blocks with no outdoor space ⁹

WHAT WE OFFER

The Children, Young People and Families Team, based at Tulse Hill Adventure Playground, provide open access play and youth activities for young people aged 8-16 years. Our after school, Saturday and school holiday sessions provide opportunities for young people to come and go freely and explore risk in a safe and playful environment through building fires, bikes, skates and go karts, free play, cooking activities, team sports and creative arts activities. Our dedicated youth and play workers also provide group and individual coaching in two local secondary schools, supporting young people to reach their potential.

This year, despite Covid-19 restrictions the Children & Young People's team provided young people with online play sessions via Zoom as well as offering a Toy Library, ensuring young people still had access to play equipment. As soon as we were able, in April 2021, our Playground opened back up for in person sessions. In July, the Adventure Playground was awarded the London Youth Gold Award for the teams 'dedication and commitment to the wellbeing of young people'.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR



229 young people worked with throughout the year



165 young people were new to our services



190 children & young people visited the adventure playground



42 individuals received 1:1 and group coaching



Sam's Story*

Sam first started attending the adventure playground in September 2020. During his first sessions he appeared very timid and shy. He was unwilling to participate in activities amongst other children and as a result, independently played on the trampoline.

Sam loved to engage with Prince (our High Trees dog) and spent the majority of the sessions either playing alone on the trampoline or playing with Prince. One of the youth workers spent time with Sam during every session getting to know him and his different interests.

After a few sessions, the youth worker introduced Sam to two other children at the playground who also enjoyed playing on the trampoline. The youth worker supported the new group by setting them challenges and games to do together and soon the group were roller skating together and creating new games on the trampoline. As the weeks progressed, Sam grew in confidence and self-belief and began to regularly engage with his peers without support from youth workers. He began introducing other children at the playground to roller-skating and supported them to try new activities.

In January, face to face services were cancelled and the youth workers held online sessions after school. When the adventure playground re-opened again in April, Sam was always the first person at the gate at the beginning of sessions. Since then, he has introduced other friends from his school to the playground and showed pride in giving them a tour and introducing them to playground staff. Sam continues to be the first person at the gate during our after school and Saturday sessions.



*All names have been changed.



INCREASING VOICE & INFLUENCE

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT

- 41% of residents in Lambeth do not believe that they can influence decisions affecting their local area ¹⁰
- Only 52% residents agree that residents work with each other to make improvements and only 43% residents think that in the next year they are likely to get involved with others in their local area to deal with local issues that might arise ¹¹

WHAT WE OFFER

The Community Action Team works to support residents from Tulse Hill and neighbouring areas to build more active, represented and civically engaged communities. We do this through the approach of community organising which starts with listening to understand the issues people face. Through listening we identify leaders and support them to come together with their neighbours to organise, to build their collective power and secure change on issues important to them. We achieve this by providing one to one and group mentoring, practical support and accredited training in community organising.

We also deliver a range of bespoke community action projects across Lambeth in response to needs that emerge from listening to the community and stakeholders. Within High Trees the Community Action Team work closely with other teams to help build user voice and to ensure that beneficiaries always remain at the heart of everything we do.

In September 2020, the Community Action team continued to offer one-to-one digital support for people who had received support via the Digital Hub. As Covid-19 restrictions lifted, the team were able to re-establish face to face meetings and door knocking in the community, forging new connections and supporting community members to take forward campaigns for change.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR



348 people took part in listening sessions



40 community leaders supported



25 individuals trained in community organising

31 mentoring sessions

78 listening sessions



INCREASING LOCAL VOICE AND INFLUENCE: **Stories of Change**

Damp Campaign

The Community Action Team have provided support to St. Martin's Tenant's and Resident's Association (TRA) on their campaign to get damp issues on the estate resolved for residents. This work built on the previous support given by High Trees to set up the TRA in 2014.

Residents on St Martin's Estate have been living surrounded by mould and damp for more than twenty years. High Trees Community Action Team came alongside the TRA and residents and provided them with community organising support to help them to shift the issue from individuals making individual complaints about damp to adopting a community organising approach to win for everyone.

In 2019 the Community Action Team advised the TRA and residents impacted by damp to demand an independent environmental inspection of the blocks impacted. In the past residents had repeatedly been blamed for causing damp in their own properties. However, they knew that the damp was not caused by residents and that an independent inspection of the blocks would reveal the truth. With the support of the Tulse Hill Councillors, residents submitted a deputation to the Local Authority in 2019, with the then cabinet lead for Housing agreeing that the Local Authority would commission an independent environmental inspection.

The results of the inspection were published towards the end of 2020 and reported that the housing associations had a 'victim blaming culture' by suggesting it was the residents' behaviour and lifestyle which caused the damp. The impact of this report is to highlight the necessity of £1.7m worth of repairs to be carried out over the next 10 years. If repairs are not carried out, Lambeth Council will be able to take legal action.

St Martins TRA are continuing to put pressure on the Housing Association to ensure the works get done. This is one of the biggest wins a TRA has had and an excellent example of how building power with neighbours through community organising can ensure residents voices are heard.



Water Rates Campaign

In June 2021, the Community Action Team were approached by a resident concerned that local council tenants were being overcharged for their water bills. Despite raising this issue repeatedly, local agencies had not been responsive. The Community Action Team helped the resident to find others who had also been affected and to build an organising group. Through personal networks, posters, stalls and knocking on doors, Justice for Housing Association Tenants was formed.

Over the past few months, the Community Action Team have helped the group to develop their community organising practice. This involved work to break down the problem, connecting the group to their neighbours and helping them to develop a strategy and tactics for escalation. An analysis of power was also fundamental in understanding where to build alliances and where to build pressure. Members of the group have also been developing their public speaking skills in preparation for speaking to the press and councillors.

The group have now formalised their demands, created a website, appeared in the South London press, conducted a petition which currently has over 100 signatures and have started working with a local Councillor. They continue to recruit more tenants to their group to build the collective power required to secure change. The focused activity of the group has led housing associations to actively respond to their concerns and Metropolitan Housing have already escalated refunds as a priority.



INCREASING LOCAL VOICE AND INFLUENCE: **Stories of Change**

The Fields

In May 2021 the Community Action Team were able to go back to forging new connections in a listening analysis. We did this by knocking on doors, initially concentrating in one estate in Tulse Hill, and completing listening analysis of all these conversations to build an accurate and current picture of the area.

The team found people who were proud of where they lived and supported their neighbours. They enabled a core group to come together to connect and organise around the key issues and concerns on the estate. The group created a vision of a clean and healthy estate, and the Community Action Team supported the development of a detailed strategy with a clear set of demands and tactics on how to get there. Alongside this, the group's leadership capabilities were growing week by week through mentoring and coaching.

The Community Action Team supported the group to identify the key decision makers to liaise with. This resulted in the decision to call a public meeting with senior officers from several housing associations. The group also decided to start a petition to demonstrate the wider support on the estate for their demands. With support from the Community Action Team, the group were able to successfully set up the first public meeting with senior officers in several years.

More meetings are now planned and estate visits to hold decision makers accountable to taking action to improve the estate. The Community Action Team continue to support the group as they grow their community organising activities and build their power with each other to take action on further issues.



Association of Latin American Parents (AMPLA)

Over the past few years, the Community Action Team have worked alongside one of our partner organisations IRMO (Indoamerican Refugee and Migrant Organisation) to support a group of Latin American parents. This work has focused on how the group can use community organising tools and principles to improve the lives and circumstances of the Latin American parents and families in Lambeth.

At the end of 2019 the Community Action Team worked alongside IRMO to support the group to run a space to think event where the parents mapped out some of the issues Latin American women face with policy makers from the Greater London Authority. The Team also supported them to become a constituted group and to secure a pot of funding to act on issues important to them. Thanks to ongoing support from IRMO, AMPLA are now a well-established group of passionate, committed parents working to take collective action on issues that matter most to them and their families.

High Trees Community Action Team, in collaboration with our Education and Training Team, ran a series of ESOL adapted community organising training sessions for the parents on three Saturdays over November 2020. During the training the Community Action Team helped the parents break down the issues they had previously identified so they could decide where they could take meaningful action.

The group has since gone on to build their membership, conduct a listening event, develop a podcast to share advice on dealing with housing issues and have run events to celebrate their culture. AMPLA were also recognised at this year's Lambeth Adult Learning conference, winning the most outstanding group award for their efforts to act on issues impacting Latin American parents and families.





WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

WHY THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT

- Thriving local communities depend on organisations working together to share best practice and formulating joined up responses to local challenges.
- Historically, a lack of infrastructure support and a competitive funding landscape have contributed to voluntary community sector and grassroots organisations creating isolated strategic and service delivery approaches in order to sustain themselves.
- Partnerships can achieve greater outcomes than individuals or organisations working alone. They share expertise, skills and resources and can offer both more comprehensive and specialised support than organisations working alone.

WHAT WE OFFER

High Trees are leading members of some of Lambeth's most impactful voluntary and community sector partnerships. We drive strategic alliances between local community and grassroots organisations, enabling joint strategy building and decision making.

Our partnerships are based on shared values, equity and has led to a practice of continual learning. The work we have undertaken to strengthen local partnerships has led to increasing opportunities and better provision in areas such as youth services, digital inclusion and community space.

In light of Covid-19 restrictions, all partnership work moved online, providing a supportive space for practitioners and manager to share resources and best practice around balancing online and face to face delivery. As restrictions eased in the summer of 2021, Building Young Brixton hosted a face-to-face Sports Day event at Tulsa Hill Adventure Playground, bringing together young people from eight partner organisations for the first time in two years.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS



PLACE
FOR **ALL**

CONNECTING
TULSA HILL

LAMBETH COMMUNITY
HUBS NETWORK

“ Sharing of resources and tools, particularly around times of crisis like Covid was hugely beneficial. We were able to come together and design things we could all use. And that comfort of knowing that you've got your peers there to advise and see how they are approach certain things. ”



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS: Our Partnerships

Building Young Brixton

Since 2016, High Trees have been incubating Building Young Brixton. This is a consortium of eight Lambeth-based youth service providers focused on creating opportunities for young people to thrive.

The consortium enables young people to access personal and skills development, education and career support, play activities, and advocacy training. Last year, Building Young Brixton supported more than 700 young people to improve their wellbeing, build positive relationships and increase civic participation through integrated youth service delivery.

Building Young Brixton has received support from Lambeth Council, the GLA, and City Bridge Trust, and has created a blueprint for community partnerships in Lambeth and beyond. Over the past year, the partnership has continued to evolve our collaborative working practices, strategically sharing resources and developing collective plans to meet young people's needs. This year, the partnership has successfully raised a three-year grant from National Lottery Community Foundation, investing £1.2 million into the partnership to create long-term sustainability.



PARTNERS:



Place for All

Led by High Trees, Place for All works towards a more equal and inclusive Lambeth by developing communities' skills for life, work, and civic participation. The partnership sees High Trees collaborate with the Baytree Centre and Indo-American Refugee Organisation (IRMO) to develop practical systems and referral routes as well as learning and best practice across our education, employment and advice services. Our collaboration has been supported by National Lottery Community Foundation and the GLA, enabling us to deliver much needed services to more than 1000 community members each year.

Last year saw partners working together strategically to adapt to changing lockdown restrictions, sharing best practice for adaptations to both remote and Covid-secure face to face delivery. Together, the partnership reached over 1400 services users, 400 of which accessed support across Baytree, High Tree and/or IRMO, demonstrating that movement across the partnership remained high despite the pandemic.

Collectively, the partnership exceeded numerous milestones, including supporting more than 300 people into better employment and improving English skills for more than 350 ESOL learners. In the light of heightened economic insecurity, the partnership set a particular focus on providing advice services, and successfully raised £50,000 from the Greater London Authority to deliver welfare advice across our own community sites as well as neighboring Children Centres', foodbanks and religious sites, broadening our reach to communities in need.

PARTNERS:



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS: Our Partnerships

Lambeth Community Hubs Network

Lambeth Community Hubs Network provide access to educational, creative and social space for communities across Lambeth. The partnership is made up of five longstanding place based organisations, each of which has been active for more than 20 years.

Working collaboratively, the network aims to use our collective experience and capacity to enable the sharing of best practice, our strengths and learnings for the benefit of our beneficiaries and the wider VCS sector.

Last year the Hubs worked together to develop and share best practice and policies for delivering services in community settings, shared Covid policies and frameworks and worked to ensure the Hubs can expand its capacity to support smaller and newer community-based organisations.

PARTNERS:



Connecting Tulse Hill

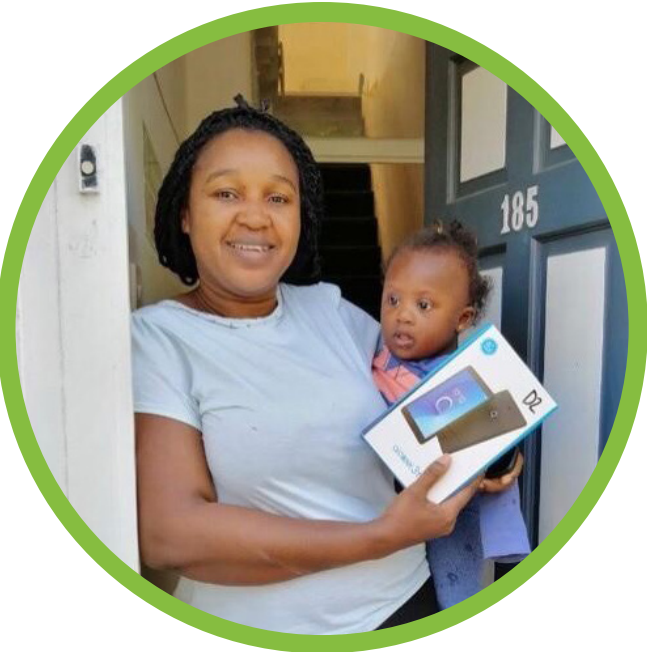
The Connecting Tulse Hill (CTH) Partnership came together in 2020 to provide a collective response to address digital exclusion in Tulse Hill during the Covid-19 pandemic. The partnership objectives were to ensure that:

- Individuals could access and apply for welfare support they may be entitled to
- Individuals could take part in online courses that were being delivered by High Trees
- Children and young people could engage in their remote learning
- Individuals and families could stay connected to each other via video-calls and access support services

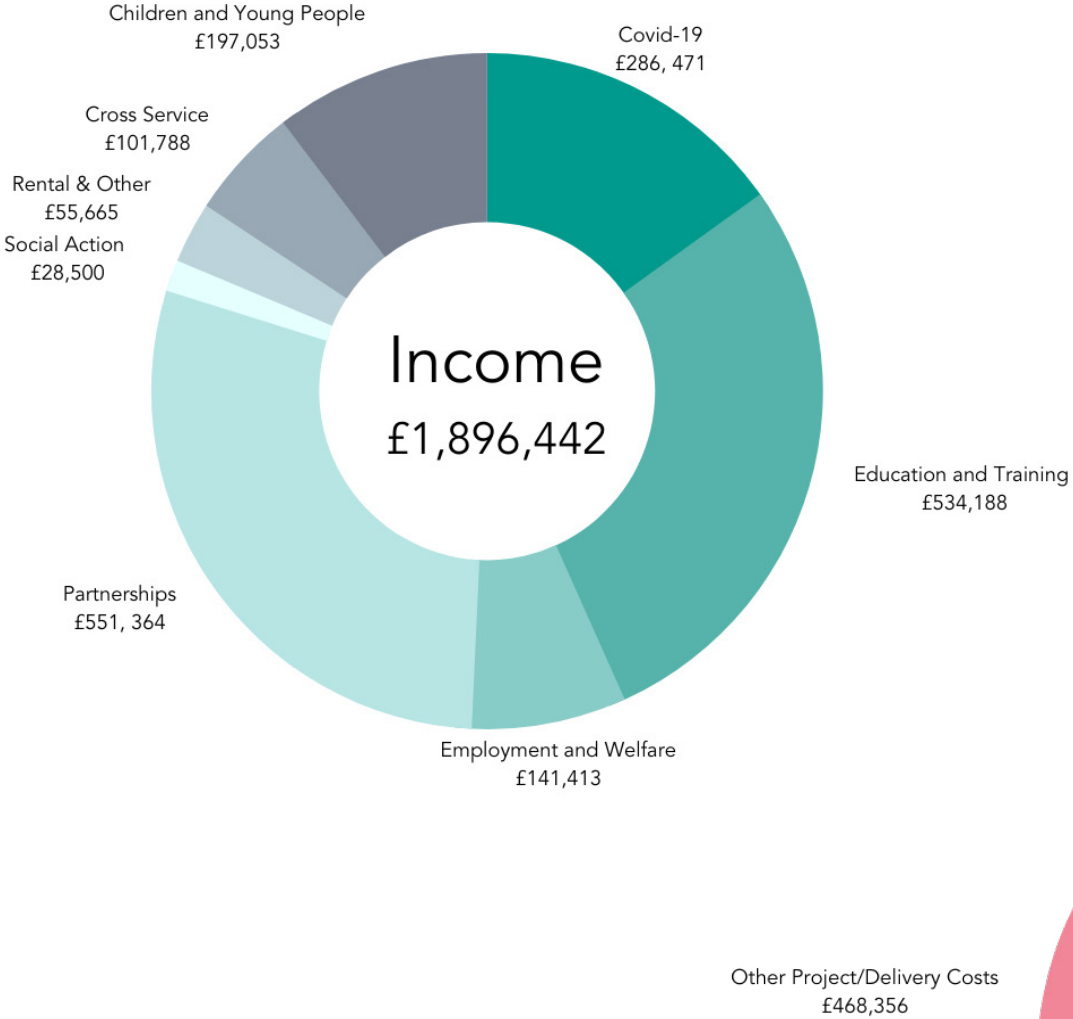
The partnership was initially formed by High Trees, Jubilee Primary School, Tree Shepherd and the Tulse Hill Ward Councillors and ensured that Tulse Hill residents who were in contact with other Tulse Hill based organisations could also receive support. Referrals also came in from St. Matthews Project, YellowQube, Holy Trinity Primary School and three Tenants and Residents Associations (St Matthews, Tulse Hill and St. Martins).

High Trees played a key role in managing and administering the partnership which ultimately was able to crowdfund over £15,000, allowing the purchase of 190 IT devices for vulnerable residents in Tulse Hill. These devices enabled community members to access a range of vital services. The partnership also developed a proposal to bring Community Wi-Fi to the Tulse Hill Estate, which resulted in Lambeth Council including the provision of Community Wi-Fi as a key part of their digital inclusion strategy. As a direct result of the Connecting Tulse Hill partnerships, Lambeth Council are now leading on the implementation of a pilot community Wi-Fi initiative on Tulse Hill estate.

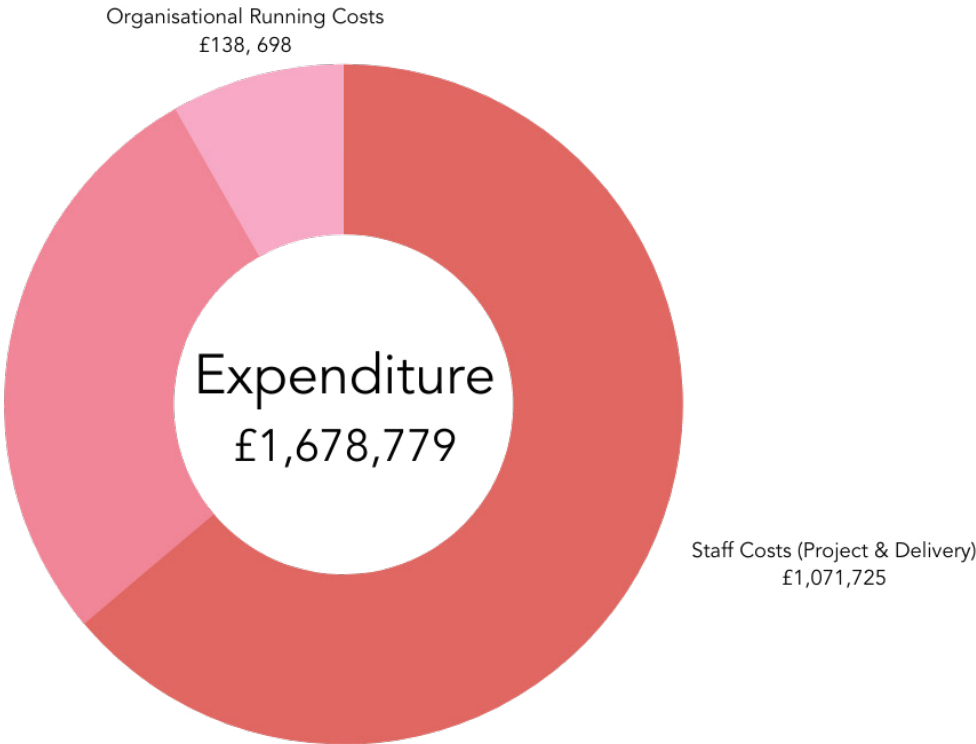
PARTNERS:



FINANCES April 2020 - August 2021*



High Trees are very grateful to our funders which this year included: The National Lottery Community Fund, Trust For London, Barclays, Impact on Urban Health, Good Things Foundation, Lambeth Council, Greater London Authority, Children in Need, Berkeley, Sport England, L&Q, Battersea Power Station, London Councils, Walcot Foundation, Henry Smith, City Bridge Trust, Postcode Lottery, Tudor Trust, London Community Foundation, John Lewis, Charities Aid Foundation.



*To bring our Financial reporting in line with our impact reporting schedule, these accounts represent a one off 17 month Financial Year. Our accounts can be accessed from the Charity Commission website

HIGH TREES FUTURE PLANS

1. REFURBISHMENT OF PREMISES:

2021 – 2022 will see High Trees Learning Centre finally refurbished, with fit for purpose facilities, dedicated pods for one to one employment support (bringing this service back on to our main site), extra spaces for community meetings and events and more space to house our growing team. Unfortunately, our Adventure Playground is still without the large outdoor play structures and the building is in poor repair. Negotiations with Lambeth Council have yet to move forward to allow this to vital work to take place – resolving this will continue to be an organisational priority.

2. IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK:

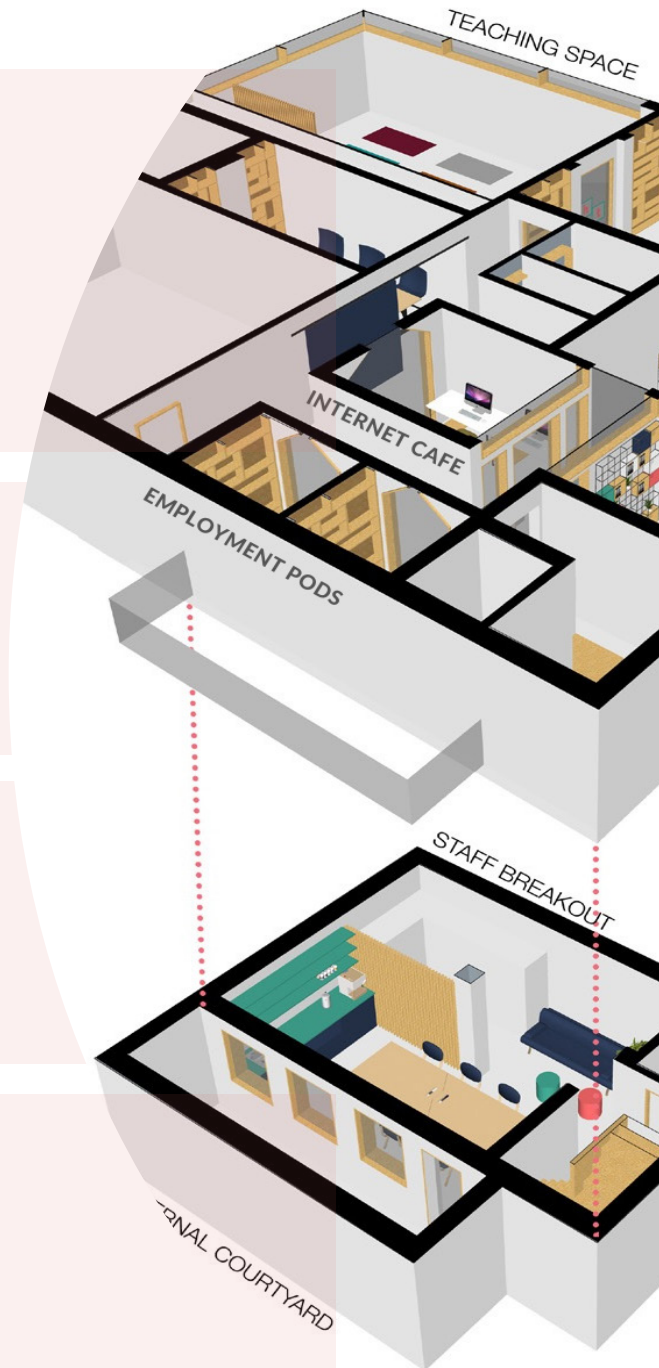
High Trees have recently renewed our Theory of Change, and 2021 –2022 will be the year our revised Impact Measurement Framework will be embedded across all our service areas. This will allow us to improve our data capture and ensure we are able to more easily measure not only the impact of our individual services but regular audit for performance gaps across all demographics.

3. PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

Playing our part in creating a collaborative and connected Lambeth will continue to be an organisational priority, and opportunities will be sought to expand the partnerships we currently lead, play a greater role in others and continue to seek out opportunities to capacity build and support smaller and newer organisations in our immediate locality.

4. ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES & PRACTICES

Although constantly under review, 2021 –2022 will see a further review of our organisations policies and practices, to ensure they are the best fit for us as we have grown. We will also explore what support we can offer other organisations with their own policies and procedures, recognising that it can take a great deal of organisational capacity to develop these in line with best practice.



With Special Thanks to:



Patron:
Bell Ribeiro-Addy (Member of Parliament for Streatham)

Trustees:
Saleha Jaffer (Chair)
Ewa Pawliczko
Julie Say
Nina Morris
Sina Taiwo
Terry Curtis

END NOTES

1. London Poverty Profile, Trust for London, 2020
2. Ethnic Inequalities in London, Runnymede Trust, 2016
3. Office for National Statistics, May 2021
4. Department for Work and Pensions, June 2021
5. 2011 Census.
6. 2011 Census.
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11. Lambeth Residents Survey 2015