

## **Cripplegate and Islington Giving, survey of groups in Islington, March 2021**

In January, 2021, we surveyed 159 organisations in the borough. These included groups we had previously funded, either from a Cripplegate or Islington Giving programme, and groups who had either not received funding for a number of years or ever. Groups could respond anonymously or leave an email address if they wanted a reply from us.

We asked four questions. Questions were on two themes. The first asked groups about our application process, how they found it and what could we do more of, or do better, to be a good local funder. The second theme, in questions three and four, asked groups for their views on their funding priorities in the future, firstly in the next 12 months, and then longer term.

1. What was your experience of the application process? Please tell us about accessibility, the time it took to complete, the speed of our response, and anything else you think will be helpful for us to hear. How might we improve any of these processes?
2. Do you have ideas as to how Cripplegate and Islington Giving can be better local funding partners?
3. What do you think Cripplegate and Islington Giving should be focusing on funding over the next 12 months? How should our funding respond to the impact of Covid-19?
4. What do you think Cripplegate and Islington Giving should be focusing on funding over the longer term / 24 months?

Eighty-two groups responded. 78 had received funding from us, 4 had not. This was a “light touch” survey. We appreciate that responding groups were perhaps likely to have a favourable view of us, given that most have received funding, and that they are largely working in our current priority areas. However, given that groups could respond anonymously, we hope that gave people some freedom to be honest in their answers.

**In this summary, we have identified themes from what groups have told us and outlined actions we plan to take in response. In the appendix, we have included all the answers received.**

### **1. How do groups find our application process?**

The overwhelming majority of the responses were positive and encouraging. There were repeated comments on the following themes.

- i. Groups appreciate the quality of the programme team, the depth of their knowledge and the help we offer during the application process and beyond. Several commented that we respond quickly and that, once a grant has been made, there is a good level of support. "Support from Patrick Jones has always been invaluable." Groups also appreciate having the team visit projects and have missed this face to face interaction during lockdown.
- ii. Largely, responders found the application process straightforward, questions clear and the time taken to complete an application reasonable.

#### **Things we could do better**

- i. Some groups thought the process was clear but the form took too long to complete. The "application process has improved over the past few years for Cripplegate main grants. However, I have just completed an application to Community Chest which does require a lot of work; the total number of 'words required' adds up to about 4,000 (i.e. £1 a word for a maximum grant of 4K!)" (Maximum grant is actually £5,000.)
- ii. A few groups asked if the form could also be made available in at Word Document to make it easier to share with others while working on it.
- iii. One group asked whether we could be more flexible in how we ask for financial information.

## **2. Cripplegate Foundation and Islington Giving as a local funder**

Again, most comments were positive. Groups see us as a supportive local funder.

- i. The team communicate well with groups and responders see working with us as a positive experience. "We normally (outside of Covid) meet with our programme manager once a year and we have a great relationship with her (Nikki Wimborne). She's also incredibly knowledgeable and helpful and I often refer to her for local community / funding advice."
- ii. Groups repeatedly said they need core and longer-term funding and those who receive this from us, appreciate it.
- iii. Many responders said they would be interested in us acting as more of a convener. One group mentioned finding the catalyst meetings helpful and asked why we wouldn't do the same for all or programmes. There is appetite to share learning between groups, and across themes and issues.
- iv. Some asked for training opportunities and us to host joint discussions/meetings with others e.g. National Lottery Community Fund, the Council, CCG.
- v. Several groups asked for things we are already doing but possibly haven't communicated. For example, one group asked if we can "connect local organisations to develop and deliver cross discipline projects, eg, connecting young and old, connecting knowledge, connecting diverse communities" which is how our current Development Partners project has been working."

- vi. There were a few comments about the challenges for smaller groups. For example, one group said they wanted more support for core costs. “Small charities in particular are over reliant on small grants that tend to be restricted. A core costs programme would really useful for smaller grassroots organisations.”
- vii. Groups are keen to have forums to share ideas and for our team to start visiting projects again.
- viii. One group commented said they have the impression that we “tend to fund who [we] have always funded and so it is difficult to break in. Coming into this field a few years ago and applying to Cripplegate and then Islington Giving and the Big Alliance - it was all a bit circular.”

**In response to what we have heard, we will:**

- Audit our application/monitoring forms to ensure they are appropriate for the amount of funding available.
- Have a version of our forms in Word.
- When possible, start visiting groups again.
- Ensure that the open calls for grants, including those written by participatory grant making panels are clear and straightforward.
- Offer core funding wherever possible, and continue to promote Community Chest as a core funding opportunity for smaller organisations.
- Continue to develop our role as a local convener, including building networking into all our grants programmes. We have already held a networking meeting for recipients of our recent Supporting Families resident led fund and will continue to consult with groups when shaping programmes as well as bringing grant recipients together during the course of their grants.
- Ensure that we reach out to groups not known to us. In 2022, we will hold an open call for organisations either not in receipt of a major grant from us in the last five years or who have never had funding from us.
- Ensure that we offer fair and transparent mechanisms for organisations to pitch their ideas, projects and longer-term programmes.

Several of the points above dovetail with actions we will be putting in motion in response to the IVAR code ([Flexible Funders | IVAR](#)), which Cripplegate Foundation has signed, in particular, around looking at accessibility, prioritising core funding, being clear in our calls and transparent in our responses.

**3. What should the Cripplegate Foundation and Islington Giving be funding over the next 12 months?**

- i. Overwhelmingly, groups are asking for core funding. There is nervousness about how groups will replace “crisis funding” and a sense that groups need core grants to help them respond to changing provision as a result of Covid-19. One group commented that we should be “investing in programmes/capacity building which really helps people transition out of lockdown as smoothly (practically and psychologically) as possible,” while

another said

we should be “helping organisations to pivot/recover and become sustainable in the new normal.” Groups don’t yet know what the “new normal” will look like for their residents, and for their organisation, so need the flexibility to change direction within current funding.

- ii. There is concern about sustainability of organisations post-Covid-19, and a possible loss of important VCS groups in the borough. “Already we are seeing that post March 2021 many of Islington’s VCS organisations do not have funding secured for their mid-term to longer-term survival. Now, the focus must be on putting the infrastructure funding in place to ensure that the highly responsive and valuable services provided by the VCS can continue. Islington’s VCS has played a major role in the Covid-19 crisis response, so everything possible must now be done to make sure that they have the best chance of survival.”
- iii. Groups identified a wide range of issues our funding will need to address. Not surprisingly, these reflect the work groups are doing but also our current funding priorities – young people, isolation, mental health. Indeed, concern around mental health pervades many of the comments, whether as a result of isolation, financial stress, pressures on young people and families, lack of physical activity or the opportunity to share social experiences. Groups want to be able to meet again.
- iv. Groups expressed high levels of concern about increasing poverty. The “pandemic crisis has huge impact on the most vulnerable clients in terms of every aspect of their lives.”

#### **4. What should Cripplegate and Islington Giving be focusing on in the longer term?**

- Core and longer-term funding were again cited as being important. “It would be fantastic. Having secured funding for longer term gives you peace of mind and you could only concentrate helping people.”
- Not surprisingly, groups identified priorities within the broad categories we already fund (“I would like to see more focus on young people - their wellbeing and opportunities. To be fair that is the priority of the charity I am involved with!”). Several groups talked about employment opportunities for young people and there is theme around recovery and bringing communities together to support each other in this process. The “community needs something positive to look forward to. A place where people can heal, express themselves and share the experiences.”
- A wide range of possible responses were given in response to this question, from broad, recovery themes to specific ideas – “classes to help people make their budgets go further”.
- There is appetite to build on changes which have happened as a result of Covid-19 and to involve residents in this process. “It would be great to encourage local organisations to think about how to involve and empower those communities more by co-designing/ co-producing projects. I can imagine an Innovation Fund in which grantees are trained to adopt these approaches and then try them creatively with their service-users, coming together to share impact.”

**In response to what we have heard, detailed below, we will:**

1. Continue to engage with groups to listen to their concerns. We will do this through individual conversations with groups, working in partnership, for example, with Voluntary Action Islington, the Council, and other umbrella groups, and continuing with group conversations such as our fortnightly Covid-19 response call.
2. Engaging with wider research and evidence from across the sector, both in terms of need and funder responses.
3. Continue to engage with the needs of residents by listening to what groups tell us about the need they are seeing. We engage directly with residents through our participatory grant making programmes and through our work on the Resident Support Scheme.
4. Evaluate how our Crisis Fund support has impacted groups funded.
5. Spend time looking at our current funding priorities and make changes if appropriate to respond to post-Covid-19 need. This may include some additional research within the borough, including talking to more residents.

**Appendix – Full survey responses**

| Have you applied to Cripplegate / Islington Giving programmes in last five years? | If your response was 'No', can you tell us why not?   | Have you been funded by Cripplegate or Islington Giving in the last five years?  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Responses: 82</p> <p>Yes: 78</p> <p>No: 4</p>                                  | <p>We have been a beneficiary indirectly and have provided match funding but have not formally applied.</p> <p>Most likely because we were not aware of the funding or did not fit the eligibility or funding specification requirements.</p> <p>I thought our chances of being funded as a social enterprise and C.I.C were low. Perhaps</p> | <p>Cripplegate Foundation 9 (TAP- 1 &amp; Dev partner- 1)</p> <p>Islington Giving - 6</p> <p>Community Chest - 5</p> <p>LCRF - 5</p> <p>Young Catalyst 2 (change makers -1)</p> <p>Catalyst 2 (family support - 2)</p> |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <p>better to partner with another charity who can hold the grant. Also I expect we need to build a relationship with you as a funder first to have a chance of being funded vs. organisations you know well and have previously funded.</p> <p><b>Other:</b> We have received some funding in previous years - we were also unsuccessful in the most recent Islington Giving Open Call (November 2020) as we were currently receiving funding from Cripplegate and the fund was over subscribed. This was very helpfully explained to us.</p> | <p>Gardening project -1<br/>YGM (mental health) -1<br/>Small grant -1<br/><b>OTHER</b><br/>Building Social Networks -1<br/>Funded to a) run a pilot of Talk for Health in schools and b) pilot one to one wraparound support so that more people with disabilities can access our service<br/>Advice for women experiencing domestic violence, marriage statues problem including Polygamy, LGBTQ+ young girls and women experiencing abuses -1<br/>Support children with SEND -1<br/>Football Activities for children, young people and their parents -1<br/>Health watch -1<br/>Friday Night Out -1</p> |
|--|---|---|

**4) Do you have ideas as to how Cripplegate and Islington Giving can be better local funding partners?**

**i) Generally okay with how things are**

- You are one of the best partners we have had,
  
- No new ideas. Keep on doing what you are doing
- No. Their work is first class
- No our experience was really good from start to finish and they supported us after the grant was spent with other resources and contacts too.
- I have had a great experience so not really
- not as the moment as quite new grantees, but will let you know if we do.
- already great funding partners - very responsive and understanding of Voluntary advice needs
- Please continue with your good charitable support especially for small but grass root charities.

- "My

experience is that Cripplegate is a fantastic local funding partner; for example, when I was new in post, the Programme Director made time for a comprehensive call and then introduced me to a range of other local organisations so that I could get my bearings.

- As I have said I have been very impressed by the way Cripplegate works and in particular by the way the organisation seeks to support funding partners to work better together.
- Cripplegate does very well already. So many funding pots are only for 'new' initiatives. I like what Patrick Jones said about identifying current projects that are working well and supporting them to continue and grow.
- I think the process Cripplegate and Islington Giving have in place regarding visiting potential groups and charities is very welcoming. It allows them to see the services provided first hand
- Keep doing what they are doing. good communication.
- I think they do a really strong job and am excited as to how fairer Islington develops.
- No - all very personable and appreciated
- You are the most supportive of our main grant givers!
- No. I think it is a healthy partnership.
- The way it is, is very good and also easy to use and the time of response is also good.
- No. We were successful in working together with Islington Giving on an online auction to raise funds for IG and ourselves.
- No we were very happy with the support we received.
- Cripplegate foundation are aware of the community needs, we want them to continue helping organisations with funding.
- No x5

#### **Funds / Funding / post funding support**

- Helping fund and support development plans for the future
- Have clearer criteria of what the funding is for to avoid applying for something which does not quite fit exactly what you are looking to fund.

#### **ii) Convening**

- Yes. Perhaps they can bring in a local organisation representative to have an input in how funding priorities are set.

- An

impression - but may not be reality - that they tend to fund who they have always funded and so it is difficult to break in. Coming into this field a few year's ago and applying to Cripplegate and then Islington Giving and the Big Alliance - it was all a bit circular.

- Mailshots informing groups of available funding
  - Yes, more support for core costs. Small charities in particular are over reliant on small grants that tend to be restricted. A core costs programme would really useful for smaller grassroots organisations
  - support after awarding grant, create links between other funded projects
  - Perhaps doing more checking outside of grant applications to see who is doing what. But maybe you already do this.
  - I know this is tricky but, if we had been turned down (which we weren't) it would have been useful to have feedback on the reason - not just "we couldn't fund everyone and had to make some hard decisions"
  - I think it really helps for you to host joint discussions/meetings re local provision with groups of e.g. mental health providers, funders such as National Lottery AND Local Council/CCG. That way, funders, providers and local services get a better overview of needs in the Borough, who is doing what, and scope for collaborations
  - We found multi-year funding to be really helpful and it would be great if this could continue after the pandemic.
  - I also really enjoyed the Family Catalyst Fund meeting which enabled me to meet other grantees and share outcomes, good news stories and local knowledge. I think, capacity depending, this would be a great idea for the Main Grant too - enabling me to share progress/ learning and use the information to take to wider Islington strategic forums e.g. the Mental Health Partnership Board."
  - Network opportunities to meet the funder or book a time to speak with someone at your organisation so we can better determine mutual goals and start building a relationship
  - The Quarterly meeting from Islington Giving is very good because they can connect the similar organisations share and exchange ideas and experiences together in order to plan for the grant more effective. At least one per year CrippleGate can gather all organisations they support for a training purposes depend on the most needed support for those group.
- 
- Mailshots informing groups of available funding
  - Could help with training or linking with inkind support such as tech or offers of corporate volunteering/probono
  - Offer grants to organisations who can fill the gaps in the social service.



- As far as I

can see, there don't seem to be any funding opportunities for small/medium-sized organisations who work across multiple boroughs as well as Islington.

- by running projects for longer with local organisations in the know of the need
- Providing multi-annual funding
- longer funding, core funding
- These days, rarely do you find the opportunity to present and discuss creative, innovative and responsive ideas. We understand that funders set out funding programmes to fit with their aims, vision and purpose, however, within that it would be hugely beneficial to engage the local VCS in consultations and set up fair and transparent mechanisms for organisations to pitch their ideas, projects and longer-term programmes.

### **iii) Linking up (more) with funded projects**

- Host more networking events to create delivery partnerships and to offer joint funding to encourage partnership working
- Visit as many local groups as possible and find out about the problems they are facing with funding. Hopefully advice and help in what ever area of concern.
- Have more resources to reach larger number of communities.
- "To continue to offer core funding, particularly for multiple year grants to give organisations longer grants to support organisations to plan and grow their work in the community.
- To connect local organisations to develop and deliver cross discipline projects, eg, connecting young and old, connecting knowledge, connecting diverse communities. "
- "In addition to the current supportive sessions provided by Cripplegate and Islington Giving, there should be more one-to-one support for those struggling with applications i.e. opportunities to submit applications through videos.
- It might be good to link up the various projects you fund, each project bringing different attributes and coming together to offer a varied package for the local community. For example, a referral from a local group (homeless, refugee) to a community food growing project to grow food for a community cooking project that feeds the community.

- I know

times are difficult and things are really different now but hopefully in the future you will be able to visit our projects and meet the people that we are working with and our teams who are dedicated to improving the lives of Islington residents. Funders being part of our team is as important for us as the work we deliver.

- We found the partnership to be quite beneficial. We would love, coming out of COVID and when its safe, to invite the team to one of our 5km challenges so they can see first hand the impact the programme has on the confidence and overall wellbeing of primary aged girls in Islington. (Islington Council Community Chest, in partnership with Cripplegate Foundation)
- Maybe spending a little time in funded projects, where appropriate, just observing or taking part in things?
- Come and visit all those centres and organisations witnessing their hard work.

#### Other

- Historically, I believe that VAI and Cripplegate haven't worked closely together, which always seemed a lost opportunity. Maybe I'm out of date with the current state of that partnership.
- I think the level of support we have had is always very good. In the past we have been part of a group meeting to feedback on our experiences and responses to strategy. If this was provided online again that would be useful.
- n/a - I'm not really sure, you are amazing in what you do but it would help if there was perhaps more link up with good things that are already happening and what people are talking about. So i'd like to help more BAME identifying individuals and groups get more opportunities (eg, having a go at paddle-boarding or kayaking at Islington boat club, sup at Islington) or more access to safe cycle training and for that matter access to doing up or getting hold of bikes that fit and work.
- Forums particularly now to discuss Covid-19 and its implications on delivery
- For young people to give feedback on how they felt the presentation went, either via an email reply or in the chat
- meeting and workshop for exchange of ideas
- I'm relatively new, so what I'm looking for may not be widely relevant, but I'm interested in understanding what the fund is doing, what the focus is, and where it's going

**5) What do you think Cripplegate and Islington Giving should be focusing on funding over the next 12 months? How should our funding respond to the impact of Covid-19?**

### Funding / core grants

- Core funding X2
- We desperately need longer term funding. It has been really helpful accessing short term funding and we understand that it may take a combination of funders to secure projects for 3 to 5 years. There will definitely be a need for more intensive work to help the community to recover and to become more resilient in the future.
- increase capacities of the charity sector to become more resilient and prepared for the recession, offer grants that reduce poverty in our communities
- As a small organisation, I am also sure we are not alone in seeing our core costs/ sustainability suffer as a result of frozen main grant streams and diversion to emergency funding.
- It is more important than ever to keep the groups funded especially those who rely on funding to deliver their services. Cripplegate and Islington Giving should focus on helping those that are able to continue delivering services during the covid pandemic.
- To help Community Groups to sustain vital services that they provide to the local community - help groups with core funding support particularly to the smaller/medium groups
- Continue to support core costs of organisations who work long term in the borough to ensure they are able to survive a difficult upcoming period.
- Orgs still need core funding, just like before. Crisis grants have been hugely important but I worry about these reducing the "normal" opportunities for core funding. I know of at least 2 grant makers who have stopped grants until they work out their own positions (Porticus is one).
- Due to Covid-19 many people lost jobs, support services have been reduced. If people do not get support, at the right time, they will go through severe difficulties. For instance, as a front line advice service, we are working under pressure to respond to community needs. Increasing staff hours will help us to help more people. We believe that many organisation facing the same situation.

We would suggest two approaches:

1. It would be great to make funding available to provide both tablets and training to use online resources - e.g. this could be very powerful for women and mental health, particularly if resources were designed in community languages.
2. It would be great if local organisations could see a temporary boost to their core funding on the proviso that they use this to capacity build - perhaps in combination with the meetings described above to co-design funded Islington partnerships?

### Children / Young people

- I would like to see more focus on young people - their well being and opportunities. To be fair that is the priority of the charity I am involved with!
- The money was used last year for a summer school project for disadvantaged children in the St Peter's Ward. It was very much needed and will be even more so in the coming year when children's lives and schooling will have been so disrupted so I think your funding should be focused on helping vulnerable groups recover from the pandemic and lockdowns
- They should fund more or helping educational organisation that work disadvantage children and young people. Especially during this pandemic.
- I suppose it's about stopping isolation in the community in particular for young people who are totally disenfranchised without access to further education and training , there must be some kind of support for young people with an idea of What they are able to access for career advice or training
- It should be focusing on helping support young vulnerable people during Covid-19 lockdowns, to combat isolation, loneliness, anxiety, depression and wellbeing.
- Support for children, the elderly and people with mental health issues.
- children, mental health (including children's)
- As a result of Covid-19, there is an extremely concerning crisis among young people in terms of their mental health, education, training and employment prospects that should be the focus of both Cripplegate and Islington Giving in the coming 12 months.
- Youth and employment
- Younger people / aged people / young mums and Dads
- Funding organisations who are supporting children's education during this difficult times, for example many children have no computers to access the online learning. Children with SEND can not be able to type, they can benefit of printers to write their homework instead, or voice command computers. 1
- Bursaries so children can attend our workshops at Angel Shed and similar projects in Islington to rebuild confidence in socialising and to get them active again.
- Support for children and families who have faced emotional, financial hardship and bereavement during covid and beyond.
- Training work experience programmes for young people trying to enter the workplace."
- Young people, employment and mental health

### Isolation / Poverty / Inequality / Cohesion

- "Many people, including our clients, have seen their mental health suffer as a result of Covid-19. Many of our clients who are already disadvantaged have also struggled with data and digital poverty, meaning that those who were reliant on face-to-face networks (particularly those who don't speak English) became more isolated and vulnerable.
- Community projects working with homelessness, poverty, food and isolation **xQ6**
- Covid 19 has really exposed the stark inequalities that exist in our society. The people who have been worst affected by the pandemic have been those people working in lower paid jobs or on benefits, those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those living in poorer housing conditions. I would like to see Cripplegate and Islington Giving to continue to focus on supporting organisations and initiatives that work to address inequality within the borough.
- I think you need to work out which people have been most devastated by Covid-19. That may be children who have been left behind in their schoolwork. For us, it is marginalised people who have lost precarious jobs AND accommodation (the eviction ban is an urban myth!) and/or who have been left abandoned by the closure of so many services. Dare I suggest that food is not as big an issue as is made out - it's just quite easy to supply! Mental/emotional health of people living alone who have become disconnected and who will just not cross the digital divide.
- Improving mental health and wellbeing after a long period of isolation and inactivity for those most effected. Supporting those affected in this way who also experience poverty.
- Plan to support building a more resilient community able to recover from impact of covid
- The devastating impact of Covid on some families
- Reducing isolation. We are finding especially the older old are really struggling being alone all the time. For us its a case of ringing people and keeping in touch
- for us it would be to continue supporting local families who are in need and may be isolating with toy and food parcels.
- In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Cripplegate and Islington Giving should aim to focus on community cohesion activities to help rebuild people's confidence in their community especially for those isolated and vulnerable. **2**
- Things to help people who are isolated like virtual social activities and choirs, and things to help vulnerable people or families who are overcrowded with little or no outdoor space, like social distanced gardening groups.
- Vulnerable families and the effect this has had on children.
- Focus on social isolation
- Outreach to children and families from deprived backgrounds in Islington

### **Mental Health**

- Loneliness & poor mental health amongst the already disadvantaged in our community. Covid-secure small group activities are vital- one to ones are all very well but our groups need to meet socially.
- Projects to support individual's health and well-being: young and older and also employability.
- Mental health is already a big focus for us, and with the unemployment numbers and reports on increasing number of children suffering from mental health crises, it is a huge area that will need support from more than just the NHS. And for young people who have been hit the hardest with loss of income, jobs, and a viable path to the future - ways to engage, train and support young people is another key area to provide extra resource and support.
- The main focus should be on the people's mental health and mental health awareness. People need to socialise in a safe way, they need to experience group activities, and feel as a part of a whole, feel that they are not alone. Without social contacts they are losing the connection with the outside world, focusing on the inner world and fears, which unlocks many mental health problems. Easy, accessible counselling and group activities for adults as well as play groups and fun activities for children.
- There should be a focus around sports activities to help strengthen the physical and mental health of young people and their families. 2
- mental health and road to recovery

### **Environment**

- Environment; improving facilities in local parks and estates
- Making use of the low traffic neighbourhoods - hugely imp in tackling air pollution, climate change etc. Maybe offering FREE cycle storage in the locked bins. They are too expensive for many families to use. Maybe you could simply cover the costs and help more people make more use of these people friendly streets

### **Unemployment / Education**

- Support for people who have lost work or housing
- Education and unemployment, mental health

### **Covid impact / coming out of the pandemic (with mix of issues)**

- ah tricky...because the existing needs are exacerbated, while emerging needs have cropped up. I would say conflict/wellbeing/isolation (because that's what we're working on!) but aside from that, I think from hearing our clients, a lot of them are finding that existing support (e.g. groups) are not running, and that's made things harder. But I imagine that even when they are up and running, the transition will be v hard, because change is hard. So investing in programmes/capacity building which really helps people transition out of lockdown as smoothly (practically and psychologically) as possible.
- I think it would be good to support members of the community hardest hit by the current pandemic but also supporting the smaller organisations that suffered most as a result of loss of income and funding.
- Supporting orgs to recover and grow from the impact of Covid19 i.e. support with core funding, with 'pivoting' what we do to be sustainable in the long term, and with building on creative opportunities that have arisen because of the pandemic (e.g. in our case, the opportunity to offer more of what we do online, which in turn can be more accessible to e.g. people with disabilities, parents with small children).
- Small organisations on the brink of insolvency. Day provision for homeless and vulnerable people. Food poverty and digital exclusion.
- In the next 12 months, much support should go toward helping those people who have been isolated from society for such an extended period, as well as helping those who are hungry. As always, times like these show just how big the cracks are in supporting the most vulnerable. We've seen such wonderful actions taken by a lot of individuals and groups here in Islington and hopefully that collective effort continues long after we've emerged from this period.
- YES - pandemic crisis has huge impact on the most vulnerable clients in terms of every aspect of their lives for us advice needs and this Funding via Tap enables those clients to obtain advice, vital money for them and their families to survive
- Given the seriousness of the new variant we are likely to remain in an emergency situation for months to come. The need to support community based charities who would have the capacity to reach those unreachable for support remain critical
- I presume you will continue to fund where the need is greatest especially during Covid. I would hope that your criteria can be adapted to accept the changes in how the organisations you fund are managing to operate.
- I think there needs to be funding designed to mitigate the impact on groups who have been disproportionately affected, e.g. very young children, BAME groups, people with physical/mental health conditions and people who have experienced domestic abuse. With government restrictions likely to continue well into 2021 this should still be the focus.
- The biggest impact of Covid-19 that I am seeing is on mental health, social isolation and well-being: people living alone who struggle in ordinary times are being particularly hit by the pandemic. Activities and socialising have stopped. Some people, older or with health issues, have been shielding for months. Those who have lost livelihoods have been severed from work colleagues who may have been their only social contact. Only the physically able can 'exercise' with another person.

- Underpinning this for many people is financial hardship which may threaten their ability to feed themselves or pay their rent, or it may just make them feel that life will never be manageable so is not worth continuing. Covid-19 is creating extreme stress and despair.
- "I would imagine Cripplegate would want to focus on and fund projects that help people get back out and form human relationships again. Small things matter. Things that link or re-link people with regular activities, with communities and other people, that can give them structure, meaning, purpose which over time becomes an ongoing support. "
- Next 12 months funding should be focused to relieving Covid 19 challenges and impact it had on local communities. In particular, Disadvantaged communities and vulnerable people. The focus should also be on helping voluntary organisations that are bridging the gaps and addressing the deterioration of certain issues resulted from loss of face2face statutory provisions.
- Supporting the most hit areas of the community.
- Mental health and, after Covid, increasing community interaction / reducing social isolation (**repeated in Q6**)
- After effects of C-19: loss of skills, mental health difficulties, loss of regular support, isolation and loneliness
- Advice their groups and members on ways they can carry on sessions during this pandemic. It is extremely difficult to actually interact with our students.
- the long term effects are going to be even tougher than the pandemic itself. Focus required in so many areas especially as government support drops off. Strengthening communities
- Whilst the LCRF has been hugely beneficial to organisations and communities who are suffering most from the crisis brought about by the pandemic, the funding is short-term. Already we are seeing that post March 2021 many of Islington's VCS organisations do not have funding secured for their mid-term to longer-term survival. Now, the focus must be on putting the infrastructure funding in place to ensure that the highly responsive and valuable services provided by the VCS can continue. Islington's VCS has played a major role in the Covid-19 crisis response, so everything possible must now be done to make sure that they have the best chance of survival.
- Focus should be on making sure projects can continue and the community can remain supported. This can be through financial aid to projects, making sure they can offer financial support to participants, or through funding direct needs within the community such as internet and technology aid. **1**
- Covid 19 response and sustaining small charities who support the local community
- Helping organisations to pivot/recover and become sustainable in the new normal
- strengthen the organisations to help them emerge from the pandemic



### Other

- Going online with zoom call concerts/ filmed shows where we cannot access the venues
- Yes
- People with better IT skills can help the parents, who will be able to better support their children in the online learning.
- It should focus on all the Communities to assist and support with the group and individual needs which will benefit the group and as an individual to better and empower themselves and to give them the opportunities to make a difference in their community and within their selves.
- As frontline, community organisations we are constantly having to adapt, flip between types of services we provide and be innovative about how we can support our clients. Some support and awareness around that would be helpful as planning ahead is becoming more difficult.
- **Leave it open to service providers** to suggest what would help residents to manage / recover from the pandemics trauma
- Tackle domestic violence, young issues and support people with emotional need, IT support for people, especially women to use zoom and services online for their needs.
- vulnerable groups, devices, dongles, poverty, holiday hunger!! Extra school paper books
- To revive the community under Covid 19. Through partnership and events festivals, etc. Also Hongkongers coming to settle in the UK. Home Office estimated there would be 125,000 in the year 2021.
- Food cooperatives. Adult fitness/physical activity projects.
- Contact Local groups to find out the impact covid-19 has re: company/ local groups. any available information to help. which is already done.
- Projects that support parents. Parents (mums) have become teachers, there are helping with online learning and have to deal with all the other home chores. There is so much pressure on them, some are being effected by COVID19.
- Covid-19 has affected groups like ours - Highbury Walkers - as we haven't been able to meet. Some meeting (probably online) between each group and the funders might be useful in terms of identifying ways forward. We are currently in limbo.

### 6. What do you think Cripplegate and Islington Giving should be focusing on funding over the longer term / 24 months?

#### Funding

- core funding
- Repeat or longer-term funding
- Sustainable funding for small organisations ran by local people that may not have the resources to fundraise regularly and will be overworked and understaffed!

- as Q5 - unrestricted income has dried up
- longer term, multi-year grants
- I'm not sure if I'm right here but my impression is that some orgs in the Borough have benefited from long-term funding from Islington Giving of mental health and we missed out as we weren't part of the picture when multi-year grants of prevention of mental illness were awarded. My understanding also is that quite a bit of funding intended for prevention went instead into meeting acute need, and this could be reviewed to achieve a better balance.
- There is funding for Debt (DFL) and we have Housing LA contract but massive gap in welfare benefits and housing (non legal aid) and clients MH needs
- Cripplegate and Islington Giving should focus on funding smaller groups who show evidence of delivering continuous beneficial services within the community
- Continuity, identifying and supporting organisations to find funding from other sources.
- To focus on grant giving in areas most affected by the community
- longer funding
- It would be fantastic having secured funding for longer term gives you peace of mind and you would only concentrate helping people.

#### **Children & young people**

- Children and families
- As Q 5 - I would like to see more focus on young people - their well being and opportunities. To be fair that is the priority of the charity I am involved with!
- I think the far ends of the spectrum in our society will need support - young people and the elderly. Anything that can support these two groups to help them recover from this time and feel a part of society. They're sense of isolation are for very different reasons, but if there can be an effort to to help them (on top of all the other great work that you do) that would be great to see.
- As Q5 - I suppose it's about stopping isolation in the community in particular for young people who are totally disenfranchised without access to further education and training , there must be some kind of support for young people with an idea of What they are able to access for career advice or training

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- A lot of young people that have either left school or college have missed opportunities to get a job, and a focus on helping young people to get into employment is needed.
- The same really (in Q5 - support for children, the elderly and people with mental health issues) plus creativity for young people.
- creating creative spaces for young people, media literacy specially in light of all the fake news on the internet
- On ways to help the community groups get back up and running projects that help children and young people especially the less fortunate. Which is of great concern to us during this lock down.
- but we are also aware that school students have really suffered over the past 12 months- we are working with 11 by 11 Cultural Partnerships and would like to start a Young Gardeners Club for primary children.
- Focus on SEND children and young adults helping them to gain meaningful work experience and to enter the workforce.
- Providing more work experience and training opportunities for young people.

#### **Post pandemic support**

- recovery will take longer than one year
- Post COVID recovery - growing back stronger, resilient and able to embrace continuing innovation to address new needs.
- Rebuilding the local community and the connections between people and communities.
- Covid recovery services
- The impact of Covid19 on the national economy, health and the society is huge. We need the council/VAI to bring us together to assess the impact and plan post Covid19 recovery and development. The outcome of such conversations could point out areas of priority needs which Cripplegate could support over the coming 24 months.
- I think there needs to be funding designed to help the community recover from the impact, for example, looking at the affect it has had on the accessibility of services or the education of children. There has been a high availability of crisis funding and this seems like it should be the next step.
- Helping local Groups rebuild themselves and function again.
- Bringing people together again to recover from the effects of the pandemic
- Due to the recent pandemic and Covid lots of communities and individuals have been affected very badly and need help and support providing activities which will support their well being, health, emotional and their mental health due to the lockdown which has caused lots of strains on their family and themselves.

### **Mental health**

- Mental Health and wellbeing providing counselling and befriending support. Young people and education and employment support. Challenging food poverty.
- Prevention over the long term IS probably better than attempted cure when it comes to mental health.
- Improving mental health and well-being, employment opportunities and readiness for people with learning disabilities and Autism
- Improving mental health and wellbeing and addressing poverty to reduce inequality especially for marginalised groups.
- Help for mental health problems especially in children and young adults.
- Adult and children's mental health, educational programs, play groups, safety measures, so people can socialise in a safe way.
- Concentrate On mental health and parenting.
- Physical activity programmes
- Projects that tackle mental health. Covid19 is effecting so many lives, specially the BAME communities. For example, provisions/activities that will help improve the physical and mental health and well-being of people who living with poverty.

### **Poverty / Inequalities / Isolation**

- Reducing inequalities, especially people who are able but not competitive in a demanding work environment
- Bettering our community, diversity & inclusion, assisting lower classes in the education of future generations.
- Homeless and needy groups and Youth Facilities particularly out of school clubs.
- In the longer term, I would suggest continuing your focus on Islington's most deprived/ hidden residents - e.g. homeless refugees, asylum-seekers, families sofa-surfing with NRPF - who will perhaps have been hardest hit and are likely to suffer further repercussions within a hostile environment.
- I would like to see Cripplegate and Islington Giving continue to focus on tackling inequality. We don't know what the repercussions of the pandemic will be, but it would seem that we are likely to face a recession and there may well be significant reductions in public spending as the government seeks to recover the spending that has been necessary to deal with the pandemic. These issues are likely to more adversely affect those in society who are currently the poorest and most marginalised. Covid has shown the importance for all of us to seek to tackle this inequality. I would therefore like Cripplegate and Islington Giving to continue the focus on inequality.
- poverty stricken families in urgent need of basic support as a result of Covid
- Sustaining the local community.
- Social isolation  
Projects that help reach people who are isolated/living alone so that they feel a part of their local community despite COVID.

- Focus help in deprived areas, bringing inclusivity and equal opportunities to those who live in deprived areas and suffer from financial deprivation and have emotional needs.

#### **Environment**

- Improving open areas; parks and children areas
- Mental health and outdoor space in particular accessing the outside. pop up parks (more like chat rooms) like in central street outside St Lukes are a wonderful idea. What about an ambition for ONE in every street where people can just have a meeting point.

#### **Other**

- Keeping successful programmes going and helping to build them more.
- As Q5 – ‘ah tricky...because the existing needs are exacerbated, while emerging needs have cropped up...’ Also identifying which services are preventing issues - rather than focussing only on acute need.
- Longer term we would ask that there is investment in capacity building for organisations who are now having to deal with increased levels of tech and food poverty as well as longer term impacts on families regarding mental health and support needs.
- It would be great to encourage local organisations to think about how to involve and empower those communities more by co-designing/ co-producing projects. I can imagine an Innovation Fund in which grantees are trained to adopt these approaches and then try them creatively with their service-users, coming together to share impact."
- Probably same as in Q5 as they are needed even in normal times. But it depends on what happens in the world. Something else may hit after Covid--19. Sometimes you have to change plans.
- Strengthening community feel and principles. Let's not pretend that everyone in Islington has pulled together - plenty have, but many have been isolated or have acted unhelpfully. How can we change things so that people do feel they belong? Citizenship.
- Supporting partnerships between organisations which can work together. Share information and support to access external funds. Prioritise activities which Dan demonstrate impact.
- Strategic planning for a future, combine of outdoor, indoor and virtual activities and helping people to lean more manage part of their needs and services online.
- Community needs something positive to look forward to. A place where people can heal, express themselves and share the experiences. More community groups should have access to free counselling and therapeutic sessions.

- Long term in depth work with islington residents to support them to thrive in the borough and those who use their knowledge and relationships to also benefit others in the borough.
- strengthening communities and grass roots
- Art and culture, green spaces (education, employment, mental health)
- I'm biased and don't have a good enough information about comparative needs across the borough to answer this properly. Partnership working is crucial though; building on the work we've done through the C-19 crisis.
- Youth, employment and social isolation
- As described in 5, there are a number of key VCS organisations in Islington that have proven their ability and agility in responding to the Covid-19 crisis and these organisations need to be supported. The impact of Covid-19 has impacted significantly on the mental health and wellbeing of communities and people of all ages and backgrounds. So, there needs to be a focus on how communities can build their mental wellbeing and re-engage with their local communities. Further, the importance of accessing greenspaces for health, well-being, leisure and community activity has to be invested in - now more than there should be a creative re-imagining of how communities engage with their local outdoor spaces, street-scapes and the like - for community re-building and physical and mental wellbeing.
- Young charities, food banks, holiday hunger, detached work, gang violence
- Assistance and Settlement for the Hongkongers living in the Borough of Islington and nearby environ. Islington Chinese Association can be a hub in delivering information and befriending services.
- Perhaps efforts to build a better community out of whatever ways society has changed that seem to be 'sticking' after the effects of Covid-19?
- Togetherness. Make Islington's community come together - focussing on bringing people of different backgrounds together
- May be focus on a 12 months term/ then extend if necessary.
- Social prescribing, food poverty, and classes to help people make their budgets go further.
- Cripplegate and Islington Giving should focus on supporting hard-to-reach community groups who require support in employability, confidence building in arts, sport and culture. As the community has been through very difficult times due to bereavement, loss of income and many more important aspects, the community needs something positive to look forward to. A place where people can heal, express themselves and share the experiences. More community groups should have access to free counselling and therapeutic sessions.
- Helping people get back into work
- Yes

**Anne Shewring, Programme Director**