

Communities And
Neighbourhoods Directorate



We Do Things Differently

2016–2017

POPLAR **HARCA**

We Do Things Differently

CaN Impact Report 2016-2017

We are pleased to present to you this year's edition of We Do Things Differently, a compilation of Communities and Neighbourhoods' (CaN) annual achievements as a Directorate.

In this edition, we present stories of change. Stories kindly shared by local residents who have taken up opportunities offered at our community centres, at our employment and training hub, at our youth facility, at communal food growing gardens, at our arts, sports and events venues, at cook offs and other health-related events.

By doing so, they wish to inspire others to join, participate and engage with CaN services and programmes. By showcasing the difference that taking part has made in their lives, they hope to encourage more local people to get involved.

The succeeding pages tell us of young people who have shared how Spotlight has inspired them to try new things, aim high and aspire to be the person they want to be. We hear from local residents who

have experienced difficulties how the neighbourhood centres have become a lifeline, how they have met new friends, got a chance to volunteer and regained their self-esteem. Older residents have related how sessions like art classes, knit and chat have made them feel less lonely. Long-term unemployed men and women have wondered if they would ever have found the right job without the encouragement & support of our employment & training team.

Recovering from stress, anxiety, poor health and starting a healthy lifestyle would have been difficult for some people had they not engaged with our health and well-being programmes.

We are unable to publish many more stories of change in this publication but we hope that with those included here, we are able to give a flavour of how Poplar HARCA's community investment work through CaN have made an impact in the lives of thousands of local residents with whom we work each year.

Babu Bhattacharjee
Director – Communities & Neighbourhoods Directorate

I wish to thank everyone who has shared their stories and heartening feedback. I commend the whole CaN Team and our dedicated volunteers who have tirelessly taken part in our quest for meaningful changes to the lives of people in our local communities. We welcome 2018 with optimism that together, we can overcome new challenges and celebrate greater successes.



Employment & Training service

Abdul Hannan

300

people supported
to get jobs

Abdul is 35 years old and has been unemployed for 5 years after getting embroiled in petty crimes for which he had paid dearly, losing precious time otherwise spent in improving his personal life.

After years of depression and isolation, Abdul is now determined to move forward and sort out his life by finding a job so he can earn enough to bring up a family.

He was referred to Poplar HARCA Employment & Training Team by the Jobs Centre and was immediately supported by one of our expert E & T advisors, Akthar Mahmud.

He immediately got a job as room attendant in 2017 and just a few months later have been offered a promotion. However, the promotion meant working in shifts and on crazy hours so Abdul decided to go back to E & T and ask Akthar to help him find a permanent day job. It did not take long for them to find a post in Sainsbury's and so he is now working as Customer Service Assistant during the day although it's only part-time.

I am very happy to have come to Poplar HARCA Employment & Training Service. It has given me another chance to sort my life and change it for the better. I am determined not to let them down and I will persevere in my new job.

Employment & Training service

Balsam Attitallah

Is now working for Safer London as a Corporate Services Assistant.

Balsam has been a carer for her mother and younger sister for over 12 years. This has been a big barrier that prevented her from getting a job. Since being referred to Poplar HARCA by the Job Centre, things have become much easier.

Balsam says that it's not only that she has managed to secure a job with the help of Poplar HARCA, she has also managed to improve her skills, boost her knowledge and gained more confidence.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to have been supported by Poplar HARCA because they are not only helpful but they also do their job with passion and effort to exceed expectations, which makes their clients feel valued. I have recommended their services to lots of my friends and neighbours.

Alex Green, my advisor, made sure that my supporting statement stood out as much as possible because I had so much experience from my past jobs that I didn't really know how to talk about in my statement.

Employment & Training service

Biti Khatun

Has now completed her apprenticeship and has secured a band 4 Level role with Royal London Hospital.

Biti Khatun has been actively searching for jobs to no avail until she came across Poplar HARCA apprenticeships adverts. She immediately applied and got a prompt response from the Talent Match staff within the Employment & Training Team. She was surprised to get a response within a few working days considering that she has been applying to companies that do apprenticeships and they never got back to her.

The team members were very friendly and they have helped me in every step of the way.

Employment & Training service

Jordan Reiley

Jordan Reiley was a participant in Poplar HARCA's Talent Match programme delivered by the Employment & Training Team. It is designed to support young people who are furthest away from the labour market into employment.

From the very beginning, Jordan has demonstrated excellent leadership skills so he was encouraged to apply for a role as a youth ambassador for the programme team. His role was to coordinate the youth board to make sure our delivery was shaped by the young people themselves.

During this time, Jordan also worked with the wider Poplar HARCA team to film visual case studies with our residents.

Jordan has always wanted to pursue his dream of becoming a young filmmaker so our advisor started working with Jordan to look for opportunities within the creative industry. After many unsuccessful attempts, his advisor came across a 12-month internship with 'A New Direction' and helped Jordan apply for this role. Jordan was successful in his application and has been working with the London College of Fashion for 4 months now.

I am thankful to Poplar HARCA's Employment & Training Team for believing in me. I could have given up easily after numerous failed attempts at getting a job in the Creative Industry. I owe it big time especially to Rio and Riaz. I love my job at the London College of Fashion. I would not have made it here if not for them.

Employment & Training service

Valeria Langstaff

450

people gained new qualifications

Valeria lost her job in 2015 due to redundancy. It has been a difficult 2 years since then and her confidence started to erode.

It took a while before she has managed to get back on her feet. She thanks the Poplar HARCA Employment & Training Advisor Alex Green for inspiring her to appreciate her skills and capacity to get back to work.

She has been attending sessions on job search and building up her CV with Alex and she is very appreciative of his dedication and commitment to help her find the right job for her. She is very optimistic that she will get a new job soon.

With the help of Alex and Poplar HARCA, I have started to believe in myself again.

Spotlight Trainee

Imthiaz Hoque

My youth worker believed in me and gave me the confidence I need to get into one of the biggest organisations in the world! I am now shadowing a Manager at BT Sport and studying Media at College!

This sums up the journey of Imthiaz Hoque, a 17-year old who had very little confidence in himself until he was introduced to Spotlight.

There was no going back from the moment he discovered what opportunities there were for him at our world class youth facility. He participated in structured sessions, completed accredited training classes and took up volunteering work.

After completing his GCSEs, he was put forward through Spotlight's partnership with the Rio Ferdinand Foundation for a Traineeship at BT Sport; 6 weeks placement that consisted of 2 accredited courses. His solid application got him shortlisted for the traineeship.

While at BT, he continued to go to sessions at Spotlight to further enhance his newfound confidence, learning more skills such as the dynamics of team work and getting advice from his youth worker on how to overcome nervousness especially when speaking in front of an audience and delivering presentations. After 6 weeks at BT, Imthiaz was completely beaming with very high self-esteem.

In September 2017, he received an award for his outstanding contribution to BT Sport and they offered him an opportunity to shadow a senior manager.



Young people have attended over **7,300** sessions

Spotlight Sounds Programme

Archna Joshi

Archna is from an Indian family and the youngest of all her siblings. Her parents initially wanted her to pursue an academic career although they support her love for music, something she has demonstrated from a very young age.

She is always inquisitive and hungry to explore, research and learn from new music and other art. Her own music reflects a wide and diverse range of influences.

Archna saw herself as a loner when at school until she joined Spotlight. She was given collaborative opportunities, encouragement and support by her peers and mentors within the music programme. Since then, she has grown in confidence both on and off the stage. Spotlight's studios have provided an artistic outlet for Archna. This has been instrumental to both her musical and social development.

Within Spotlight Sounds, she was given many hours of learning mix engineering. She has digested all the information and used her own

intuition, musical judgement and determination to start mixing her own material.

She then performed at the BBC Radio 1Xtra takeover, released tracks on Spotify & Apple music. For these, she has received very positive audience feedback. She aspires to join the Spotlight music team, first as a volunteer and eventually as a paid staff leading sessions and mentoring. She is currently applying to Point Blank to do BA Hons in music production and audio engineering.

Spotlight has engaged **6,646** young people to date

I feel inspired by other artists within Spotlight Sounds. Receiving compliments from someone from the same background as myself gave me a huge confidence boost.

Spotlight is a non-judgemental creative space full of support and encouragement. No wonder many have been spotted by talent scouts to perform in popular gigs, getting mentored by BBC, while others are applying for places in Oxbridge unis.



Spotlight

Jalal Ahmed

Spotlight contributed to
40%
reduction
in all crimes in
Lansbury ward



When Jalal was first introduced to Spotlight by his key worker from Splash, he was very quiet and lacked confidence. He has found it hard to trust people after having been let down many times in the past. After his release from jail, he was permitted to return to Tower Hamlets. It is then that he realised he needed to change his life for the better.

A tour of Spotlight inspired Jalal to start something positive. He got interested in the music programmes and other provisions that spotlight had to offer. Jalal showed great enthusiasm to try out new things. He accepted an offer to take up an accredited online course in Health and Nutrition and passed it in no time. He has slowly built relationships with staff and volunteers who have given him their full support.

In the summer, Jalal took part in a week-long programme called digital beats. He started with very low confidence. He recognised that most of his friends' lyrics are very sad and always dealt with negative topics.

He decided he would write positive lyrics and chose to sing about social justice and humanity. Towards the end of the project he has become very motivated and there was a huge improvement in his confidence, especially in his speech. Jalal was encouraged to share his work at an end of project sharing in front of a big audience. He was hesitant at first but when he did, he performed really well. The experience boosted his confidence and improved his presentation skills.

He now regularly attends music sessions – You Can't Handle the Booth (grime music session) and Spotlight Sounds sessions. He is continuing to develop his skills in music and keeps himself busy in order to stay out of trouble.

Since coming to spotlight I have been able to try out new things which keep me out of trouble and occupied. Staff are also really friendly and helpful.

Summer Scheme

Shenai Daniels

Every year, the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team runs a summer scheme to enable primary school aged local children to enjoy a summer of fun away from home.

For four weeks, they get to enjoy a variety of holiday adventures within and outside London.

Shenai Daniels is one of the children who have signed up to one of the summer schemes hoping to gain lots of memorable experiences. She has come to overcome her anxiety by socialising and being involved in activities that she would otherwise not do on a day to day basis.

Shenai's mum says that the summer scheme is very good value for money as it was very affordable. Many of the activities that were programmed were activities that would have been beyond her means. She said that Shenai won't be able to go to those if they were not offered at a highly subsidised cost.

The scheme provided a better environment to make friends. When Shenai started the scheme she wasn't very confident and had low self-esteem.

The summer scheme has also helped Shenai to slowly overcome her fear of water. She has always been scared of going out in the rain, let alone try canoeing and swimming. With the support of the staff and her new friends, she has gained confidence and was motivated to take little steps at a time to overcome her fear.

Over the four weeks, Shenai's confidence has greatly improved. She has started to believe in herself and have gradually overcome her anxieties.

140
children joined
the summer scheme

If there was no summer scheme, I would have been stuck at home, bored from doing nothing. My family couldn't afford to pay for even half the activities that I would like to do. We cannot pay to go away.

I find it difficult to make friends at school but at the summer scheme, I felt at ease and more confident to approach others.



Health & Wellbeing

James Watters

Born and raised in Poplar, James Watters is East London through and through.

He grew up to become a London taxi driver for 30 years, of which he says there were good times and bad times. Eventually, various mental health issues got in the way and he became unemployed. He was also finding that as Poplar changed, a lot of his social connections were changing with it. It was a struggle for him to adjust to all the changes happening in his life and he hit a low point.

About two years ago he first got into contact with Poplar HARCA enquiring about housing and transitioning out of employment. Through this he met various people like Vicky Coakley at the Aberfeldy Centre, Bala Thakrar from Trussler Hall, and Moses Adeyemi Adeyemi (winner of the Channel 4: SAS Who Dares Wins). They were central to encouraging him to start doing things, to create things in his life that would get him out and about.

Getting a bike in order to get around was the next step in this. I combined this with a new approach to healthy eating.

Teaching brings out the best in me.

Physical activity has been a big part of my journey to recovery. I took part in the Silver Line Project, ran by Moses which was fantastic. It was one of the first things I did that allowed me to feel optimistic about my future.

But it has been re-integrating himself into the community around him and getting back into his artistic side that has been massively therapeutic to James. As a kid, he was always interested in art and was constantly drawing. He's also a prolific guitar player and has performed in pubs and the like for an impressive 43 years now. It's been a massive part of his life. He has volunteered to play at our Healthy Poplar Week, used to tutor, and is currently looking to run classes at the Aberfeldy Centre.

With encouragement and links from the community, he undertook a painting and decorating apprenticeship. Through this he has gotten into creating art with recycled materials and has started helping to do up a micro-pub. Taking a creative writing class with Mind encouraged him to work on his own novel: a – perhaps semi-autobiographical – story about a taxi driver who tries to become a guitar player.

With volunteering and plenty of creative endeavours on his plate, James is full of life and enthusiasm for his future.

Health & Wellbeing

Cathy Zippe

Cathy is in her mid 60's and has lived on the Aberfeldy Estate for around 30 years as a Poplar HARCA resident.

Cathy has suffered from long term depression and was an alcoholic for about 20 years. She would drink all day every day, not socialise with anyone and had very poor hygiene. She has been estranged from her own two children as well as her brother, all of whom could not cope with her illness and alcoholism.

Eight months ago, however, Cathy has started to pick herself up and has remained sober after a serious fall. The police has taken her to hospital and received care for both her injuries and her alcoholism. They have put her on a rehab programme. After leaving hospital Cathy needed to find a way to socialise and came into the Aberfeldy Centre and started using the Café.

Cathy likes to sit in the Café and chat and socialise. She has been invited to join the IT classes but she is not ready for it at the moment.

She is more interested in health-related services and recently joined the Diabetes awareness session and particularly like that she was able to find out a lot of information about her condition and speak to people who have similar issues.

This is the second time I have attempted to overcome my alcoholism. This time, I feel much stronger and more positive about the outcomes because of the emotional and physical support provided by the Aberfeldy Centre staff.

The café and the centre staff are extremely supportive and understanding. I feel that I could quite easily rot away indoors, so even when I am down, I push myself. Being here keeps me in touch with the outer world. The Centre is a lifeline for me.

I am aware that I have to deal with my depression and I am thankful that there is a place like the Aberfeldy Centre.

Arts, Culture & Leisure

Joanna Pink

Joanna is a 38 year-old Poplar resident and a full time mum to two boys. She has been a Poplar Union (PU) participant since it opened to the public in 2017. Most of her feedback below echo the positive feelings of over 1,000 local people who have been engaged with Poplar HARCA's newest art, cultural and social facility.

“

Poplar Union has been a wonderful addition to the area and as a local family we have accessed much of their programme of events. Their diverse offerings have appealed to all of us including helping me to get fit after having children (with pilates and yoga classes) and taking some rare time to myself (sewing workshops), introducing my toddler son to yoga and my 5 year old to the delights of puppet making and giving my husband a space to enjoy films and coffee!

Although Bartlett Park is a great open space it was never very appealing to families. However with the arrival of Poplar Union it is now a real draw; helping the area to feel more desirable and a place to enjoy. The various events taking place, along with the lively café, has also helped me to meet new people who live locally. This has been invaluable, particularly as being a stay at home mum can be isolating.

Popular Union's introduction of an evening programme of events has been particularly welcome as previously we have been very limited to night-time offerings in the local area. Now we don't have to travel far to enjoy a lively but affordable night out!

We look forward to taking part in lots more activities at the venue in the coming year!

”

There has been a marked benefit to the whole family's well-being since Poplar Union has opened and we feel proud to have such a fantastic resource on our doorstep.



Welfare, Advice & Support

Shamsul Ahmed

Mr Ahmed is a 62-year old man with multiple health issues: diabetes, heart problems and loss of hearing among others. He has only one eye and the other one is very blurry. He also has some memory loss and often mumbles when he speaks.

777

individuals supported through Poplar HARCA resources

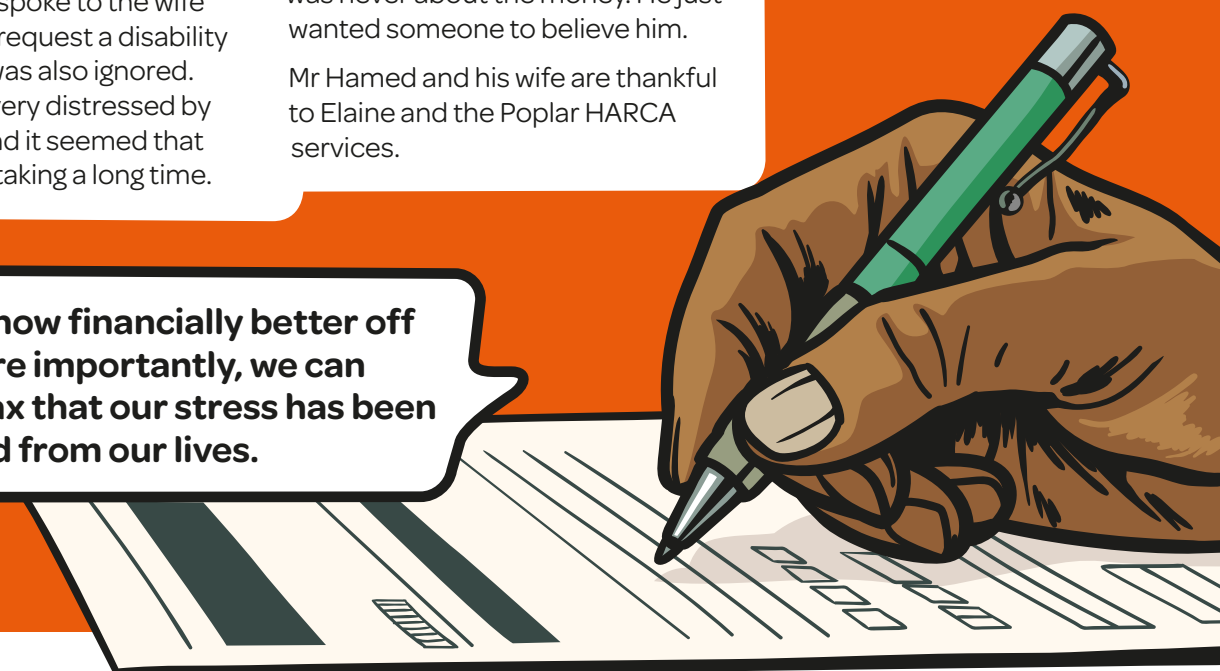
He failed an Employment & Support Allowance assessment in 2016 and was deemed fit for work. Our Welfare Advisor Elaine wrote to the DWP and asked for a Mandatory Reconsideration but was refused. She then filled out papers for it to go to an independent tribunal. In the meantime, he had to sign onto Job Seekers Allowance in order to have any money at all.

The Job Centre Plus treated him very badly. They were rude to him and did not listen. His wife tried to explain to them that he could not use the computer because he could not see very well but they told her that she was not allowed to speak on his behalf. Elaine spoke to the wife and asked her to request a disability advisor but this was also ignored. They were both very distressed by this treatment and it seemed that the tribunal was taking a long time.

Meanwhile, a successful PIP claim was made. Someone finally believed that he has disabilities. The tribunal was set for August and it consisted of a judge, a doctor and an interpreter. The whole thing took just over 10 minutes and the judge declared right there and then that he was overturning the original DWP decision and furthermore, she was putting him into the support group of ESA. This meant that he gets extra money and the Job Centre will not be calling him in for interviews. He spoke through the interpreter and she spoke to the Judge. He said it was never about the money. He just wanted someone to believe him.

Mr Hamed and his wife are thankful to Elaine and the Poplar HARCA services.

We are now financially better off and more importantly, we can now relax that our stress has been removed from our lives.



Community Food Growing

Shaheda Begum

Shaheda Begum is a local resident living on the Coventry Cross estate, in a flat with no access to a garden. She speaks very little English and her poor health has led her to be homebound.

When her son told her about the community food growing garden in the Teviot Centre, she immediately felt that this could be a way out of her isolation.

In the summer of 2017, Shaheda joined the group and got a patch to plant her own herbs and vegetables. She grew a variety of Asian vegetables and shared seeds with other members of the garden.

I started to grow my own potatoes as well as Asian crops hoping it will encourage me to eat healthier.

Since taking up gardening, I have become more active and can stretch, walk and bend a bit better than before.

Shaheda says she gets a lot of support from other gardeners while working in her patch. She enjoys sharing ideas about food growing and gardening with others.

She also says she feels happy being amongst good people whom she can trust. It gives her peace of mind to know that her plants are safe in the community garden.

Working in the Community garden allows me to detach myself from my home and to interact socially with other gardeners. Everyone has been really welcoming. Chatting to them helps me overcome my language barrier.

160 families gained access to communal gardens to grow their own food

I would like to say thank you to my son, Teviot centre staff and the garden community for making me feel alive again.

Health & Wellbeing

Rabia Khatun

Rabia is an active participant of our health and well-being programme. She first got involved with the Silver Line Project, ran by Moses Adeyemi (winner of the Channel 4: SAS Who Dares Wins), which paved the way for her regaining her self-confidence and self-esteem.

Since then, she has been motivated to attend training sessions at our Employment & Training Hub and has volunteered with Wellone, a health and well-being partnership programme led by Poplar HARCA.

Wanting to challenge and prove to herself that "I AM NOT A FAILURE", she decided to do a 10k Run. She could barely run for more than a few minutes without stopping but she patiently persevered, overcoming obstacles, not giving up out of pure determination and the belief that she could do it, and if she was able to do it meant she could do anything she sets her mind to. She did it.

Rabia now wants to focus on becoming a fitness instructor/personal trainer because she knows first-hand the positive effect of exercise on one's wellbeing, both physical and mental, and she is determined to break down preconceptions and misconceptions, especially those surrounding mental health.

By turning to exercise it not only acted as a healthy escape, it made me feel awesome, empowered.

There is no shame in experiencing mental health problems, or at least there shouldn't be, and I think the more open and honest we are the less of a stigma will be associated with mental health.

1,290

different individuals attended at least one or more health-related activities held at community centres

I'd always been a size 8 but I became a size 16, using food to deal with difficult circumstances regarding my marriage. But becoming overweight impacted negatively on my mental wellbeing.



Health & Wellbeing

Vanda Riley

Vanda has quite literally just turned 90 and in her words “is still celebrating and is not finished yet!” Vanda has been a member of the art class since it started 6 years ago.

She was inspired to join the group upon seeing their works in an exhibition at Hind Grove Community Hall. She has never held a pencil or a brush since leaving school but wanted to give it a go and she was very happy that she did.

Vanda has lived in London since after the war ended in 1946 having met her husband in her home country of Italy. They were married for over 50 years.

Vanda has always had a creative spark, being a machinist in her early adulthood. She used to make her own clothes and those of her children, even sewing some for close neighbours.

After the death of her husband 20 years ago. Vanda has spent her retirement years on her own. Her three grown-up children have also since lived on their own. The art class has enabled her to explore her creative skills and meet other women from her generation.

Vanda has had her own art work featured in the last local exhibition for International Women’s Day 2017. She especially enjoys painting in water colour.

Attending the sessions have allowed me to have a routine which encourages me to get out at least once a week. I look forward to the “story of the week” which can be sometimes good and sometimes bad. Having someone to chat about anything helps to reduce the feeling of isolation.

My body gets older but I’m not ready to give up yet. As long as I can get there, I will keep coming.

As one ages, it is important to maintain good brain function to avoid degenerative conditions such as dementia. Its very import to have something to do or think about. Any club keeps your mind alert. Physically I’m not very good, but mentally I’m alright.



Community Cafés

Cristian

Cristian is from Chile and his wife is from Sweden. He is new to the area and has discovered Poplar HARCA and Bow Brew Café. Since then, he has frequented the café where he says he’s made to feel at home.

Cristian has gone to the centre and café almost every day to work on different things and after one or two coffees, he sits down and starts having a productive day. He works on research and mostly personal projects that require a lot of time in front of his laptop.

As a resident of the area, he believes that it is important to have access to great public spaces like the St. Paul’s Way Centre with a community café like Bow Brew.

5 new Social Enterprises supported

2,004

new users registered and benefited from services offered at our community centres

I have been to at least 10 libraries, co-working spaces and coffee shops but they are no match to this centre.

It’s not just about a good internet connection, having a safe place, a good atmosphere or a big desk to work on. For me, the most important thing about Poplar HARCA’s community space is the sense of belonging we always get once we come here.

I love the atmosphere, the kind and always smiling and vibrant team.



Youth Volunteering

Anisha Lalani

Anisha began as a Youth Support Volunteer at Spotlight in October 2016.

She initially got involved to gain experience working with young people to support her application to study for a PGCE. She had never volunteered or worked with young people before.

Accepted by King's College, she began her PGCE in September 2017 and enjoyed volunteering at Spotlight so much she stuck around. In addition she has since gained a full time job teaching Science and now balances teaching, volunteering and studying in a busy schedule.

Through being a part of Spotlight, I am constantly learning new skills and meeting interesting new characters - team members, young people and the wider community.

When Anisha began volunteering and contrary to her expectations, she was surprised to find she couldn't remember what it was like to be a young person. It took time to build the confidence, techniques and knowledge to build good relationships with young people. As a direct result of her experience as a Spotlight volunteer, Anisha has had great success in building rapport with the young people she teaches.

70%
of people delivering services at Spotlight are past and current volunteers

47
volunteers assist 40 staff

I was a little nervous at first, but from my very first day I started to build good relationships with the staff and young people and my confidence grew.

The team is supportive and fun to work with and training opportunities are always on offer - I recently attended a session on safeguarding and boundaries.

Community Champions

Emmanuel Essandoh

Emmanuel was referred to CaN after expressing his interest in some hands-on community activities by one of our REST colleagues.

As an experienced chef who spent many years cooking for hundreds of staff at the Bank of America he was a great match for an upcoming community event - a Great Get Together day inspired by the late Labour MP Jo Cox - where we wanted to bring together neighbours from the St Paul's Way area to talk, play and enjoy some lovely cooked food.

230
new volunteers took up opportunities to give back to the community, gain work experience, train to gain new skills for employment and overcome isolation

I have been on the Lincoln Area Regeneration Group (LARG) for 3 years now and most recently became a Block Champion for Poplar HARCA. It has given me a great understanding of the issues facing Poplar HARCA and its tenants.

It was really great to be able to take part in this community event and do something so different, especially as I got to use my knowledge and passion for food.

I really believe that when you live in a place like Poplar, you should contribute to the community. It shouldn't just be about you and your four walls.

Schools Partnership

SHINE School

120 primary school pupils attend SHINE School

“Traditional classroom learning isn’t for everyone”,

so say the teachers in Marner and Stebon primary schools with whom Poplar HARCA works jointly to deliver SHINE School on Saturdays.

“SHINE school does offer that alternative with a rich and varied curriculum of experiences and enrichment. That children can learn without writing in books and practical hands on learning has a big role to play”

One pupil’s story has clearly proven what the teachers have said.

John Reynolds

John Reynolds (not his real name) finds writing so difficult. But in SHINE School, he has found a way out of this problem. SHINE offers a space free of classroom constraints. Its practical approaches to learning suits him really well. He is happy when he comes to SHINE. He tells this to his teachers all the time.

Before joining SHINE, John has always wondered about what kind of things pupils do at the Saturday school. He has asked if he would be able to do them too. He is very curious about many things. He had been coming to SHINE for almost 2 years, never missing a class. But he is quite a vulnerable boy. He finds it hard to get along with his peers. He always seeks adult company.

One day, something happened that necessitated John and his other siblings to go into care. He was very upset that living further away from school and with foster parents will make it hard for him to continue attending on Saturdays. He has asked the teachers to sort out something for him to be able to attend without fail and so they did and succeeded.

He was very happy and didn’t miss another Saturday. He got his excellent attendance prize and he got to go on the end of term trip. He could not wait till the new term starts again.

SHINE believes that hands-on teaching, using creative innovative techniques is the best way to turn around struggling students’ experience of school. SHINE Saturday projects do just that, helping teachers identify gaps in their students’ learning and helping them fulfil their potential and gain confidence.

Community Research - REST Listening Campaigns

Kieron Collins & Abeda Ibraheem

Kieron and Abeda are community researchers who have been involved in the Listening Campaigns being conducted by Poplar HARCA’s Resident Empowerment Support Team (REST).

They are part of a team of trained researchers who door knock at residential properties of all types and tenures (including non-HARCA properties), to conduct the research. Properties are visited multiple times, including in the evening and weekends, in order to maximise reach. Drop cards are also left for those who were out, inviting them to share their views on the phone or online.

Listening Campaigns are innovative and large scale pieces of community research, using face to face and open conversations with all residents in an area. Comments collected from these are grouped as strengths and deficits across five themes: Connectivity, Belonging, Environment, Wellbeing and Opportunities. These are then further analysed for trends and patterns – across themes, demographics, and areas within each neighbourhood.

1,609 people reached by our Listening Campaigns

To date, Listening Campaigns have been completed in four neighbourhoods – Devons and Coventry Cross in 2015, Aberfeldy in 2016 and Leopold and Burdett in 2017. Further listening campaigns are planned for all other Poplar HARCA estates.

Listening Campaigns aren’t just research for research’s sake. In Aberfeldy, our findings like deficits around shops/retail are informing the next phase of the area’s regeneration.

In Leopold, a Neighbourhood Improvement Plan is being developed with the resident group Leopold Area Regeneration Team. This has already led to increased outreach by the youth service and the creation of heritage signs to celebrate the history of the area.

Being part of the research team is a very enriching experience. It shows that Poplar HARCA wants to build a Poplar wide picture of our neighbourhoods.

Thank You

Poplar HARCA acknowledges the generous support of funders and donors who have made financial contributions for the projects and services delivered by the Communities and Neighbourhoods (CaN) Team. Their support and partnerships are valuable to all our community investment work.

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Arts Council England

Big Lottery

Clarion Futures Communities

College of Northwest London

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

East End Community Foundation (EECF)

Energy Utilities Skills

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

European Social Fund (ESF)

Football Foundation

Greater London Authority (GLA)

Garfield Weston Foundation

Home Office

HUBBAB - Fuelling Connections

London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) Events

LBTH Schools Engagement Project

LBTH Sports Development

LBTH Integrated Youth Service

London Youth

Morgan Stanley

National Health Service (NHS)

NHS Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

People's Postcode Trust (PPT)

Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP)

SHINE

Sport Relief- Dispossessed Fund

Sports England

London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)

Tennis Foundation

The Belling Charitable Settlement

Trees for Cities

Tudor Trust

UNITAS

Westminster Kingsway College

Youth Music

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