



ANNUAL REPORT

2017/18



SOUTH LONDON CARES

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Delivery figures in this report cover the period January 1st 2018 to December 31st 2018. Financial figures cover our accounting year from September 1st 2017 to August 31st 2018, as submitted in our annual accounts.

A MESSAGE FROM TIM

I make documentaries and I often do films for the arts and charities. I realised how much I enjoyed going in to meet people I wouldn't normally get to meet when I made the Hidden Heroes videos for South London Cares and thought it would be a good idea to get involved.

I really enjoyed meeting older people as my grandparents passed away and they lived in Ireland so I didn't see them often. In my daily life and work, I don't actually meet a lot of people that are that much older than me. Nora and I were matched up as I used to live just around the corner and because of our Irish connection – my family is Irish and Nora is Irish.

Nora's done a lot of genealogy and is very good at looking at historical records. She also found someone from my family in Ireland! She's got a great sense of humour, we're always laughing: she's a great storyteller. Nora is interested in a wide range of different things – we chat about films, current affairs, documentaries. We catch up and we're never short of things to say! Sometimes I help out with little bits and pieces if the iPad or

TV isn't working. Nora calls me the IT doctor! Meeting someone from a different age group is interesting. We both love theatre. Nora goes once a month – usually at the Southbank. I go quite a lot too as I often do work for theatres and get to see the shows. Often Nora and I have seen the same shows and we debrief about them. Let's say that we're honest in our reviews! When South London Cares helped to organise a puppet show at Nora's home through the Little Angel Theatre it was really nice to share the experience with her, and some of her family who came along.

I see Nora once a week and I see her for a couple of hours: there's not really anyone else that I meet up with once a week and have a two-hour catch up with. I just enjoy it, we're genuine friends. I like coming to visit Nora and it's sad to think we would have never met if it hadn't been for South London Cares, even though we live so close in Peckham. It's good to know people in the area you're living in. I've learnt a lot – even about my own history!

TIM, 34



A MESSAGE FROM NORA

I really, really look forward to Tim's visits. He is wonderful company and a great listener as well.

Before my disability progressed to this stage I got about a lot and had no trouble at all making friends. Now that's all changed. I do keep in touch with old friends but the face to face contact is always better. I like to be with people.

Sometimes I find that being older and disabled means that some people can talk over me, even when people have the best intentions. There's a lot of ageism going on and actually, there's no reason why someone can't talk to someone who's a different age to them. Many people don't see age. I don't see age, gender or colour – it's about the person and whether you get on.

I think the Love Your Neighbour programme is great. People like sharing stories and writing memoirs in their life, especially as they get older, so it makes sense to match those people with a friend who they can share their stories with. I also like showing off about the places I've travelled to!

Tim and I do seem to have a lot of interests in common. The main one is probably the hundreds of years that both of our ancestors lived on the west and south coast of Ireland. We love to share the Irish history and since I'm 74 I've lived some of it myself! We talk a lot and Tim often has to walk backwards out the front door as I won't stop talking!

Tim has made a big difference to me as I do get a bit lonely sometimes. I see my son often and he's great, as are my other family who live outside of London, but I can't get up and do the things I used to do so it can be lonely. I think there's a lot of loneliness out there, even for people who maybe don't talk a lot but want someone to just sit with them and be there.

Having company makes you feel better and not alone. I think people are meant to be together.

NORA, 74



OUR VISION

South London Cares is a **community network** of young professionals and older neighbours hanging out and helping one another in our **rapidly changing city**.

We do this because while our capital is amazing – full of cultural and economic opportunities and with history, influence and innovation at its heart – it can also feel **anonymous, isolating and lonely**.

This is especially the case for **older people** whose social networks may have frayed and whose communities are transforming faster than ever before due to globalisation, gentrification, digitisation, transience and housing bubbles; and for **young professionals** facing work and social media pressures and often living far from friends and family.

Increasingly, as our city transforms, those two groups are living in **parallel worlds**. And that separation wastes human potential, entrenches loneliness and isolation, perpetuates social division, and is ultimately corrosive for our city and our society.

South London Cares is not fatalistic about this dual challenge. Our vision is to bring older and younger people together to share time, laughter, new experiences and friendship – so that **everyone can feel part of our changing city, rather than left behind by it**.

Our target outcomes are to:

- Reduce loneliness and isolation amongst older and younger south Londoners alike;
- Improve neighbours' wellbeing, confidence, skills, belonging, purpose and power;
- Bring people together to bridge the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides.



OUR MODEL

South London Cares seeks to **address our modern blight of 'disconnection in a connected age'** by harnessing the changing people and places around us for the benefit of neighbours, communities and our city as a whole. We do this through four core programmes.

Our **Social Clubs** are group activities, occurring five or six times a week, which offer an anchor of shared time and new experiences in familiar but often changing locations including pubs, cafes, local businesses and south London's world famous cultural institutions. Sessions include dances, 'Desert Island Discs' nights, 'back to work' business visits, quizzes, themed parties and more.

Meanwhile, our **Love Your Neighbour** programme brings young professionals together with their often housebound older neighbours to build and support special one-to-one friendships and to bring some of the outside world in for people who may struggle to get out. Friends share a couple of hours of conversation and companionship every week, and are given a £40 budget to spend on games, takeaways, films or other experiences to share together.

Third, our proactive **Outreach** harnesses the city's culture and communities to identify older and younger people who'd like to participate. We go to where people are – in local chemists, supermarkets, libraries, GP surgeries, sheltered housing units and other locations – to strike up conversations and invite people to our activities. Our Winter Wellbeing project, for example, helps older people stay warm, active and connected during the most isolating time of year.

Finally, our **Community Fundraising** offers a fourth way for younger and older Londoners to share new experiences. Events, challenges, corporate partnerships and online campaigns all offer the chance for neighbours to share fresh camaraderie while raising money to keep everything in their network free.

Through each of these integrated programmes **the relationships created are two-way**: older people benefit from feeling part of their changing city and by sharing the stories, laughs and experiences that mean so much to them with younger people, while young professionals connect to the heritage of this global city through the friendship and community of their older neighbours.



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

London is one of the most amazing places in the world: its businesses, its culture, and its diversity all make this one of the most exciting places to live, work and play. But as new office and apartment blocks go up in front of our eyes and whole swathes of Southwark and Lambeth are transformed by gentrification, transience, digitisation and other factors we can all sometimes feel left behind by the pace of change.

In that context, loneliness, and broader disconnection – from our communities as they change, from businesses, from one another and from ourselves – is one of the greatest challenges of our time. **Nine million adults in the UK say they often feel lonely.** Two in five people over the age of 65 say the TV is their main form of company. 17% of older people haven't spoken to a friend or relative in a week and 11% haven't had meaningful human contact in a month. **And one in 10 GP appointments is taken by an older person with no other condition than that they're lonely.**

But loneliness is not just a later life problem. On the contrary: **studies show that young people are at least the second loneliest age group and recent research has shown that they may even be the loneliest.** Pressures at work, social media expectations, screen weariness, and "FOMO" (fear of missing out) can leave young professionals arriving in London overwhelmed and lacking meaningful connection.

This is not just heartbreaking; it's also a national public health crisis – because **loneliness kills**. It brings on heart attacks, strokes, depression and dementia. While obesity increases our chance of premature death by up to 20%, and dependency on alcohol by 30%, not having meaningful relationships in our everyday lives increases our chance of early death by a sobering 45%. It is shown that people who suffer heart attacks drastically increase their chance of survival based on two key factors: not smoking, and having **good relationships that mean something to them.**

At a time when our communities are transforming and showing signs of division, and our health and care services are under severe pressure, this epidemic comes at a huge financial as well as personal cost. In fact, our disconnection from one another could be costing the economy £32 billion a year. On the other hand, **neighbourliness** – connection to one another – delivers £24 billion in value to communities all across the country.

South London Cares' goal is to help older and younger people alike to feel part of our changing city, to build the types of relationships – forged in shared new experiences – that really mean something, and to help people to **connect to the past, present and future of our city through interactions with the people who make it great.**



2018 IN NUMBERS

South London Cares has now been running for four and a half years. In that time, we have built up a network of **2,600 older people** and **3,400 young professionals** who have shared time, laughter and new experiences across the generations in so many ways. In 2018:

- **244 social clubs were hosted**, attended 6,384 times by older and younger people;
- **152 older and younger people** are now part of the Love Your Neighbour programme, enjoying conversation and companionship every week;
- **367 older people were connected** to local activities and services through our fourth Winter Wellbeing project;

Over four and a half years, older and younger people have now **shared a total of 154,000 interactions and 23,000 hours** across rapidly changing Southwark and Lambeth.



SOCIAL CLUBS

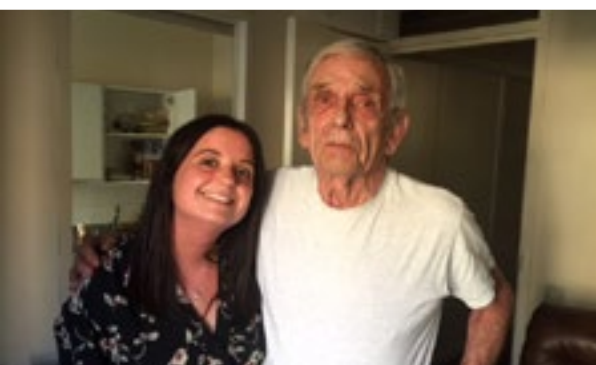
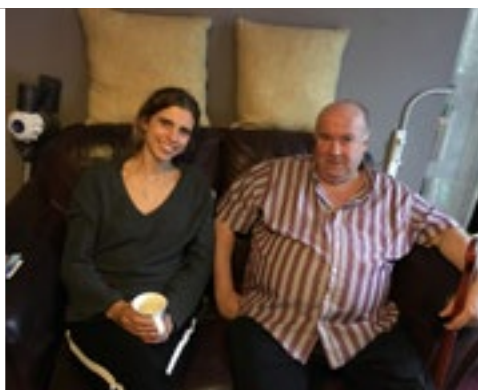
South London Cares' social clubs are group activities bringing older and younger neighbours together to share friendship through the type of exciting experiences that make south London unique.

Clubs include dance parties, yoga, podcasting, choirs, new tech workshops, quizzes, pub clubs and many more.



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

In a city moving and changing at speed, South London Cares' one-to-one friendship programme helps different generations of Londoners to find a little pause, reflection, conversation and friendship. Friends talk about everything and nothing – from work, to weddings, to days gone by. And in sharing their stories and getting out and about, everyone feels a little better connected.



OUTREACH

Our proactive outreach – identifying older and younger neighbours and inviting them to be part of the South London Cares community – is one of the things that makes our model unique.

Every day, we speak to older people where they are – on doorsteps, in pharmacies, in GP surgeries, in sheltered housing units, on estates, in supermarkets and even at bus stops, from Bermondsey to Brixton to Camberwell to Clapham. We receive referrals, from partners at Southwark and Lambeth Councils and across the proud voluntary and community sector, of older Londoners who might enjoy sharing time with their younger neighbours.

And we harness social, digital and employment networks to inspire young people to get involved – with positive online story sharing, monthly volunteer inductions, fundraising activities and socials.

Every year, South London Cares runs an intensive Winter Wellbeing project, to help people stay warm, active and connected during the most isolating time of year. Through this work in winter 2017/18, we:

- Held 1,420 conversations with older neighbours about how to stay warm and connected;
- Gave out 277 blankets and items of warm clothing, and distributed grants totalling £1,890 to 30 people really feeling the cold;
- Made 367 individual referrals or interventions for people – from housing advice to support with benefits.



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

Community Fundraising is more than just a way to raise money. It's another way for older and younger neighbours to lead South London Cares, to share time and friendship, and to show that when people work together they share power and a sense of belonging.

So we're proud that 43% of South London Cares' budget is funded from within the network – through corporate partnerships, individual

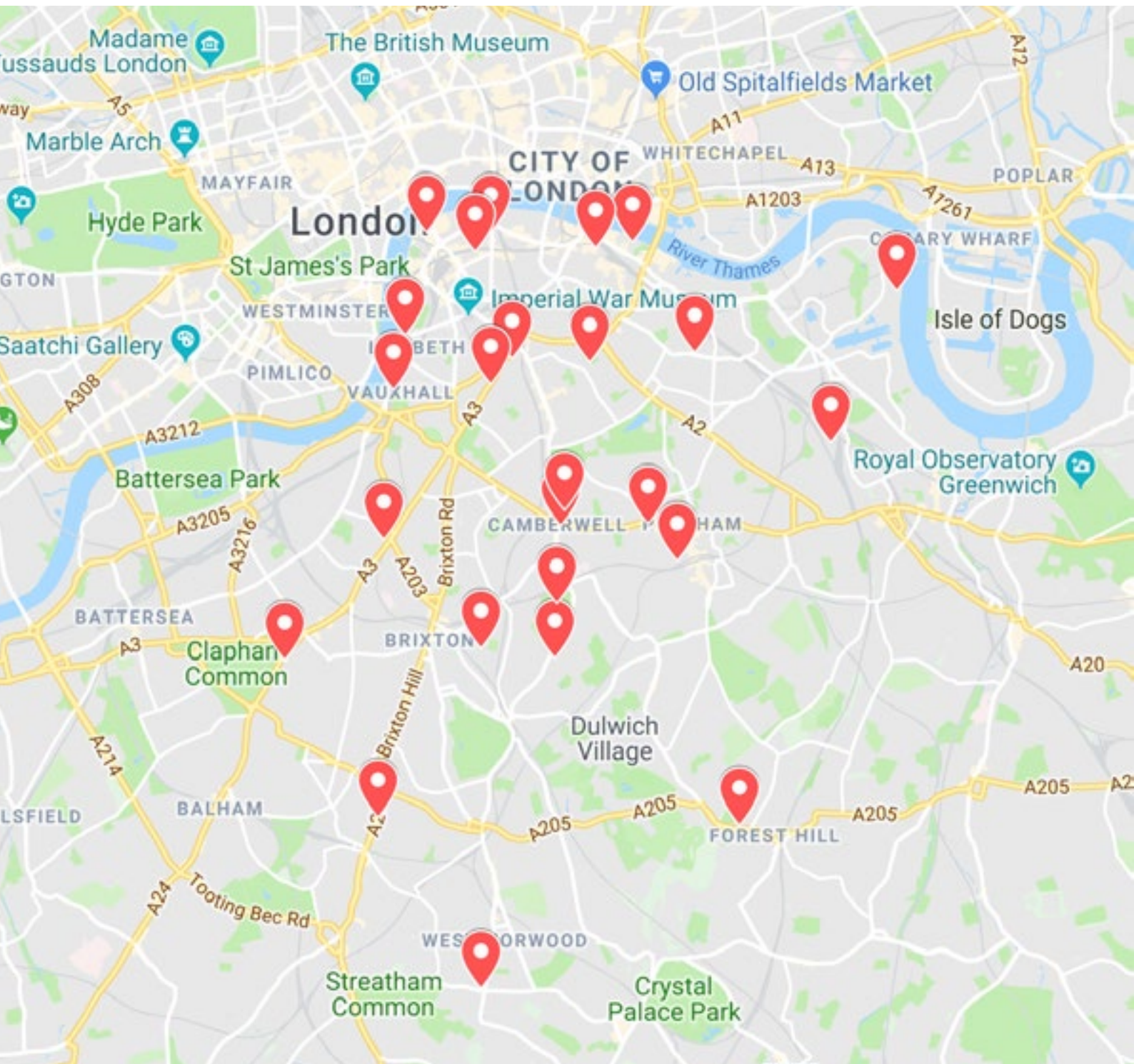
donations, online campaigns, and scores of south Londoners taking on runs, cycles, walks and other challenges to help fund the network they love.

In 2018, South London Cares:

- Inspired 105 challenge fundraisers to complete various races – raising over £36,500;
- Worked with corporations to raise an additional £53,500;
- Hosted several events including 'Hilarity for Charity' with Stewart Lee, a screening of 'Elf' which attracted 140 donors, pub quizzes and a gala at Oxo Tower;
- Completed The Big Give Christmas Challenge, raising £9,400 from 62 donors.



WHERE WE WORK



WHO WE WORK WITH

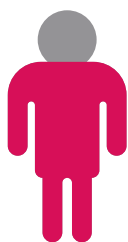
We're so grateful for all the wonderful local partners who have helped make South London Cares' vision and activities a reality – organisations from business, government and the local voluntary sector who have let us use their space, invited older and younger neighbours to join the network, and offered a home for South London Cares to put down roots. They include:

Batch & Co, Better Bankside, Ciaté London, COPSINS, The Old Red Lion, Peabody, Peckham Pelican, PLMR, The Nautral History Museum, Swing Dance UK, The White Horse, White Stuff, Salt Recruitment, Sapphire Systems, Somerset House, Weber Industries, and many other amazing places across south London.



OUR IMPACT

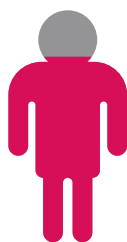
Two major evaluations have shown that South London Cares' model works in reducing isolation and helping older and younger people alike to feel better connected to the changing community around them. Of older neighbours involved:



73%
say their
isolation is
reduced



81%
say they
feel better
connected to
other people



77%
say their
relationships
with young
people have
improved



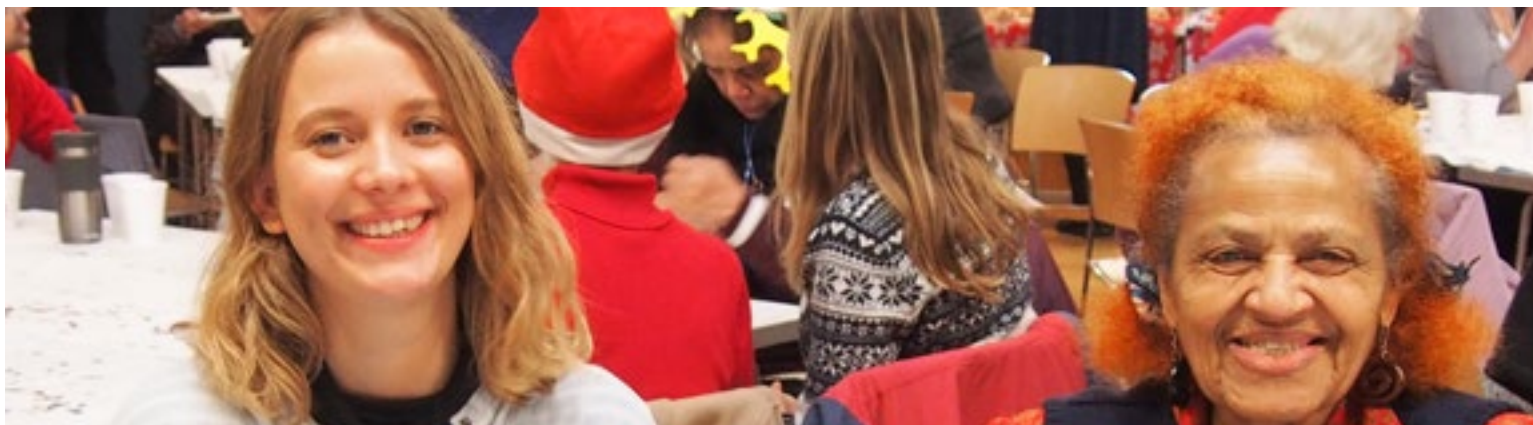
86%
say they are
better able
to appreciate
the world

- A majority report 'missing other people less';
- Almost a quarter do not attend any other social activities apart from those put on by The Cares Family.

Crucially, the young professionals who are part of the network benefit too:

- 98% say they have a greater connection to the community;
- 98% say they've been able to contribute in a way they otherwise would not;
- 97% say that they are more able to appreciate older people.

The model works because it is **designed to appeal to the people most at risk of loneliness** – not just older and younger people generally, but specifically people who live alone (67% of older neighbours in our studies live alone); the 'oldest old' (52% of older neighbours are over 80); people in social housing (59% of older neighbours are social tenants); and transient young professionals (60% of the young people involved live in private rented accommodation, nearly 40% in 'flat shares'; 53% work full time in the private sector).



STORIES

LUPITA, ELISABETH AND CHARLOTTE

Lupita, 73, met Elisabeth and Charlotte over three years ago through our Love Your Neighbour programme. Despite an age difference nearing 50 years, the three are kindred spirits, and close friends. Lupita is tranquil, thoughtful, creative, and relentlessly positive. Between chatting about music (Joan Baez sings with more sincerity than Bob Dylan, she says) and eating leftover cake, Lupita spoke at length about what her friendship with Elisabeth and Charlotte means to her:

“Charlotte came first, and we were both asked if we’d like to see one another again. We both said yes! Afterwards Charlotte introduced me to her friends Elisabeth and Anna and then Elisabeth started visiting too. We adore each other: they are absolutely extraordinary girls – so balanced and so sensitive. Whenever Charlotte introduces me to someone, she calls me her friend. Isn’t that incredible?”

Since losing her eyesight, Lupita says Charlotte and Elisabeth have played an “invaluable” role in keeping her connected and helping her out with the kind of small tasks that many people take for granted, like reading out sell-by dates and phone numbers. Emotional support plays a vital part in this friendship too and gives the three friends a

tight and strong connection. Lupita continues:

“We’re very, very close. When things have been too much for me, they’ve been there. I’m able to tell them my worst, and they also confide in me. It’s been incredible. I can tell more to both of them than anyone. I can be so open, because we have an understanding. Who would have thought two English girls in their 20s and an old Latin American woman would be so similar!? With Charlotte and Elisabeth, I don’t even need to finish my sentences: we understand each other. With them, it flows: the way we talk, the way we see things. It’s absolutely amazing. They bring life so I can live. They fill me with joy.”

And the feeling is mutual. Elisabeth says:

“She has this wisdom like nobody else. We have a mix of really silly chats, but then pretty deep conversations covering big topics like death, love, and religion. I love the way she sparks debate. She’s really spiritual, and gives me great advice. She’s very knowledgeable about so many things, particularly the body and the mind. On her birthday, we went to Putney and had lunch, then an ice cream (she loves ice cream!). We’ve become very close, we’ve even cried together! Lupita is an inspirational lady, and spending time with her is a great privilege.”



STORIES



My journey with South London Cares really has been an amazing experience so far. I was lucky enough to have a month off work while in between jobs so I decided to sign up to a few social clubs to give me a sense of purpose during my time off.

I began at a film screening in Elephant and Castle where I met Paul who reminisced over how his local area has changed over the last 40 years. A film club is a great starting option if you feel a little apprehensive about what to expect as you can socialise with your older neighbours, but it also gives you the opportunity to sit back and watch a film with a cup of tea. A great way to ease you into it!

Later, I attended Thanksgiving, pub club, a watercolour workshop, a Diwali party, script reading, a technology workshop and choir. I was involved in so many wonderful things, from

singing songs by Adele at the top of my lungs at the choir to making candles at Diwali. The Diwali social club was also a very memorable experience as this is where I met Jerilyn who brightened up my day with her many stories about travelling across India and I shared anecdotes about my own travelling experiences. We got on so well that we ended up becoming neighbours on the Love Your Neighbour programme and we now meet up for a coffee once a week.

South London Cares offers unique opportunities to meet people who you may otherwise never meet in your day to day lives. They're fun, thought-provoking and inspiring – and we learn so much from one another in the process.



RACHEL



OUR FINANCES

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources	483,813	386,450	286,005	164,345
Grants	47%	56%	58%	85%
Donations	43%	41%	37%	15%
Commissions	0%	0%	0%	0%
Restricted income	46%	64%	76%	84%
Unrestricted income	54%	36%	24%	16%
Resources expended	452,950	336,079	245,881	134,760
Direct charitable expenditure	72%	73%	77%	90%
Management, fundraising, etc.	28%	27%	23%	10%
Net incoming resources	30,863	50,371	40,124	29,585

BALANCE SHEET

Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	4,470	4,329	3,667	1,440
Current assets				
Debtors	956	13,956	13,956	956
Cash at hand	204,941	137,050	128,893	118,904
Total	205,897	151,006	142,849	119,860
Creditors	(44,896)	(20,727)	(62,279)	(77,187)
Net current assets	161,001	130,278	80,570	42,673
Total funds	165,471	134,608	84,237	44,113

OUR FINANCES

DETAILED STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

	17/18	16/17	15/16	14/15
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	317,396	246,647	165,672	88,792
Costs of raising funds	18,856	8,870	8,168	2,605
Costs of charitable activities	15,434	17,413	21,376	16,118
Rent and office running costs	22,857	22,485	16,671	8,340
Insurance	892	886	677	600
Advertising and marketing	1,952	2,172	2,798	2,604
Printing, postage and stationery	11,697	8,294	3,929	-
Other office expenses	-	404	66	-
Staff development	4,559	5,676	2,866	-
Travel and subsistence	14,729	12,091	8,888	-
Website	-	1,854	113	5,210
Evaluation and consultancy	32,065	-	7,505	7,247
Accountancy costs	4,142	2,998	2,196	2,096
Independent examination costs	900	900	600	600
Subscriptions	921	899	1,346	-
Telephone and internet	4,626	2,751	1,982	-
Depreciation	1,924	1,749	1,028	548

All figures are taken from South London Cares' annual accounts 2017/18, submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.

OUR SUPPORTERS



We'd like to thank David McDonough OBE, our first Patron, for his support, advice and kindness over the past year. We also receive generous donations and wider guidance from a number of individuals who wish to remain anonymous. Their humility is matched by our gratitude for how they help support and sustain relationships through South London Cares.

OUR INFLUENCE



In the last year South London Cares has begun to have a significant impact on national policy-making as well as local community togetherness. We contributed many insights to the Jo Cox Loneliness Commission and have worked closely with government on the development of their loneliness strategy which was launched in 2018 with a visit from the Prime Minister to a joint South London Cares and North London Cares social club.

We have given evidence to three All Party Parliamentary Groups – on loneliness, social integration and intergenerational fairness, as well as to the International Longevity Centre and The King's Fund. Our work has featured in various media throughout the year, including in various culturally important outlets beyond the traditional media.

And in 2018 our Founder and CEO, Alex Smith, was appointed to be one of the first 20 Obama Foundation Fellows, selected from 21,000 applicants in 191 countries around the world, recognising our work on loneliness and isolation as gateways into other societal issues.

We've also supported many other organisations to deepen their own impact. Excitingly, we've supported a former South London Cares volunteer to build a similar organisation, B:Friend, reducing loneliness in his hometown of Doncaster, and mentored The Chatty Cafés scheme which is now working with Costa and Sainsbury's to tackle loneliness in retail outlets across the UK.

The
Economist


THE TIMES

BBC
WORLD
SERVICE

OUR TEAM

JASMIN WHITE

HEAD OF PROGRAMMES

Jasmin oversees South London Cares' Social Clubs, Love Your Neighbour and Outreach programmes, as well as managing the team. She previously helped support young people to volunteer in their communities.

OLIVIA BROOMFIELD

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (SOCIAL CLUBS)

Olivia designs and delivers social clubs across Southwark and Lambeth. Previously she was an English teacher and a volunteer at a Refugee Centre.

EMILY GROVES

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (SOCIAL CLUBS)

Emily designs and delivers social clubs across Southwark and Lambeth. Previously, Emily worked for a touring young people's theatre company.

LEIGHANN MORRIS

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR)

Leighann leads on our Love Your Neighbour programme in Lambeth. Previously she worked for an arts and educational charity in east London.

OLIVER WAREHAM

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR (LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR)

Oliver leads on our Love Your Neighbour programme in Southwark. Oliver previously worked helping older neighbours to return home after a stay in hospital.

ELYSSA KILL

VOLUNTEER AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Elyssa manages our volunteer network and leads on reaching older south Londoners to be part of our programmes. She previously worked helping young people to gain new skills.

JOHANNA BROOKS

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Johanna supports our individual donors, coordinates fundraising events and cheers on challenge fundraisers. She previously worked in the creative arts.

South London Cares is supported by additional colleagues from The Cares Family, who also work across our sibling charities in north London, Manchester and Liverpool. **Emily Quilter** is our Director of Development, leading national fundraising, supported by our Head of Development **Catrin Thomas** and Partnerships Coordinator **Charlie Jamieson**. **Alex Smith** is The Cares Family Founder and Chief Executive.



OUR TRUSTEES

JOSIE CLUER

CHAIR

Josie is a Director at EY, focusing on local public services. She was formerly an adviser to the Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness, a Special Adviser in Gordon Brown's government, and a trustee of Alcohol Concern.

BEN WILSON

TREASURER

Ben works in the Office of the Chairman at Liberty House Group. His financial career has focussed on banking and industry, including for Nomura International, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Noble Group. He is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and holds an MBA.

DAVID EASTON

SECRETARY

David is an Investment Manager at CDC Group, responsible for investments in Africa and South East Asia. David was previously at Bridges Ventures and before that worked for the Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative and McKinsey & Company.

VIX ANDERTON

TRUSTEE

Vix works to improve the lives of women and girls. She is passionate about mental health and wellbeing, diversity and inclusion. A former Royal Air Force Officer, she spent three years working in the international development sector on projects all over the world before moving into a portfolio career.

POLLY BALSOM

TRUSTEE

Polly is Head of Communications and Marketing at Royal Trinity Hospice where she leads on messaging and campaign delivery. She previously worked at Missing People where she was responsible for communications and partnership campaigns, and has helped to establish HIV support charity Body & Soul's social enterprise 'Brave'.

DAVID HAYMAN

TRUSTEE

David is Special Adviser to the Executive Director at the ONE Campaign. He formerly worked on strategy for education charity Ark, at Educate Girls and at The Prince's Trust, having started his career at Accenture. David helped set up national educational charity Future First.

JAMES LEE

TRUSTEE

James has had a long career in local government, where his responsibilities include safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Eight years ago, I was a typical young person in London. Day after day, I would wake up, rush to work where I would sit in front of a computer and share occasional small talk with colleagues who were much like me – ambitious to get on, busy in their personal lives, happy but possibly lacking something more meaningful.

I decided to run for my local council seat, and on election day, 2010, my life changed. It changed because, doing my rounds on that sunny day, trying to get people to come out and vote, I met an 84-year-old man named Fred.

Fred told me he'd love to come out and vote. He'd never missed an election in his life. But he wouldn't be able to make this one because he hadn't been out of his house for three months. In that time, he hadn't seen or spoken to anyone apart from his carer. So he wasn't up to it.

There was a wheelchair behind Fred and I asked him if he'd feel comfortable if I wheeled him to the voting place. He was happy to. While we were out, Fred waved to neighbours. He smiled. He became animated, almost giddy, as he connected with the people and places around him.

But what Fred really wanted was a haircut and so, the next day, I returned again, having lost my election, to wheel Fred down the road to the local barber's. While he sat in that chair and told his story, I learned that Fred and I had so much in common. We'd both lived in the neighbourhood for 30 years. We both loved Sinatra. And Fred had set up and run the shop that was my favourite place growing up as a kid – a local fancy dress shop.

Eight years on, we're thrilled that this one interaction that spurred a friendship has now inspired so many more. And in our fast moving world, where loneliness is increasingly understood to be harmful for individuals, communities and society at large, we're inspired again that people being with people, sharing their stories, can help us to meet that challenge.

South London Cares is designed to reduce loneliness and help older and younger people feel better connected to one another and to the city we love. We know our model works because it is targeted to appeal to people who can benefit from those connections the most: generations who have so much to gain from one another in shared time, laughter, new experiences and friendship – especially as our urban landscape transforms.

ALEX SMITH
FOUNDER AND CEO, SOUTH LONDON CARES

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

It's been an exciting year for South London Cares. As well as all the wonderful impact of bringing older and younger people together across our south London communities, demonstrated in the photos and stories in this report, we've also started to have a real, lasting impact at the national systemic level too.

Specifically, in October 2018, the Prime Minister launched the world's first ever loneliness strategy, which we helped to shape, at a joint South London Cares and North London Cares event. She acknowledged that loneliness is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time – “a reality for too many people in our society, it can affect anyone of any age and background.”

The beginnings of that systemic change are so important because they can lead to a wider culture shift too. Because we know that while we live in a society which – with its self-service checkouts and card readers – can prioritise what's efficient over what's important, we all need to re-raise what makes us human in the first place if we're to tackle this loneliness crisis: our empathy.

As we look to the future, South London Cares is focused on driving that systems and culture change through meaningful, local, lasting relationships across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides. To do that, we are making strides towards a sustainable future – with new partnerships, new staff, new evaluation studies, and new investments in the systems and processes to keep South London Cares making a real difference in people's lives for the long term.

To keep up that local impact and national influence, in 2019 we'll be working even more closely with local community groups, sheltered housing units, faith groups and businesses – as well as government, the media and national partners – to make sure that as many older and younger people as possible can feel part of their shifting world, rather than left behind by it.

So we need your help. Please support South London Cares in whatever way you can – by joining a social club, by connecting us to your employer, by completing a marathon, and by sharing time and laughter with your neighbours. Together, we can help make our communities feel closer, even at a time of rapid change.

JOSIE CLUER
CHAIR, SOUTH LONDON CARES



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www.southlondoncares.org.uk