

# NEWARK YOUTH LONDON LIMITED

## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

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The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

### Objectives

The charity's objects are:

To act as a resource for young people living in the London borough of Tower Hamlets and neighbouring boroughs by providing advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

(i) advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;

(ii) advancing education;

(iii) relieving unemployment; and

(iv) providing recreational and leisure-time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving their conditions of life.

There has been no change in these objects during the year.

Newark Youth London was formed in 1984. Originally run as a football team by dedicated volunteers. In more recent decades, Newark Youth London has developed beyond football, and now provides a comprehensive range of services for young people and other members of the local community.

### Our Vision

"To provide opportunities for young people and community."

### Our Mission

"To develop the skills, capacities and capabilities of young people and adults to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible citizens."

### Our Aim

Helping, supporting and delivering a stronger community, by providing sport and other self-development activities to young people and adults.

### Our Objectives

- Provide safe space for young people, where they can positively occupy their time and keep away from trouble.
- Provide opportunities for self-development for young people and other members of our community, to support their future personal achievements.
- Provide great experiences, that are attractive to young people.
- To develop the personal, social, physical and educational potential of young people through programmes of sports, informal education and social activities.
- Provide a space to develop friendships and nurturing relationships, enabling people to be part of their community.
- Maintain and build our reputation for sustained quality and delivery.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

# NEWARK YOUTH LONDON LIMITED

## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES AND BENEFICIARIES

Newark Youth London aims to develop the personal, social, physical and educational potential of disadvantaged young people through sports, leisure, social activities and learning. We deliver youth clubs, informal, accredited and formal learning, sports, outdoor activities, day trips and residential. We aim to enable young people to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible citizens, and achieve the best outcomes possible.

Working with 1,400 young people annually, most of our beneficiaries come from disadvantaged backgrounds (experiencing poverty, overcrowding, unemployment and family breakdown). Our services primarily support people in London Borough of Tower Hamlets, especially young people living in social housing estates in the Whitechapel, Shadwell, Wapping, Bethnal Green & Stepney area. Young people in Tower Hamlets experience high levels of deprivation, poverty, racism and are exposed to high levels of crime, drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). As a result, many find themselves at risk of gangs, crime and violence and some end up committing crime and related violence. Many parents struggle as they are not working or are on low income. Those who have migrated recently to the UK, English is not their first language and may not have experienced a formal education themselves.

Although the peak of the Covid-19 Pandemic occurred in the previous year, the virus still caused widespread challenges during the year to 31 March 2022. With the virus circulating, many staff, volunteers and participants were impacted by the illness at various times; schools were often disrupted and care was required in managing group or large-scale events. Many young people were also adapting to having spent so much of the previous year in lock down. Newark Youth London continued to rise to the challenge of responding to the difficult circumstances and supported young people to be confident to face the world again.

Our projects delivered during the year provide opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities, stay out of trouble and fulfil their potential in life.

### Football Project

We delivered weekly football training and managed youth, adult and veteran's football teams during the year for 250 people. We had 3 youth teams playing in the Hackney Youth League involving 60 children and young people, the adult team played in the Community Football League involving 40 young adults and the veterans' team which has 30 participants played in the BFA Summer League. The football activities engage children and young people and keeps them involved in positive activities and away from ASB and crime. It develops their passion for sport & healthy lifestyle and improves their attitude, behaviour, commitment, dedication, working for success, teamwork, accepting defeats and becoming resilient. The young people improve their confidence, self-esteem, interpersonal skills and develop strong friendship and understanding between each other. It also gives older youths the opportunity to volunteer, gain coaching and leadership awards and develop their employability skills. We use football as a tool to engage young people and later provide advice and support to help them develop their skills and experiences so they can access training and employment opportunities.



# NEWARK YOUTH LONDON LIMITED

## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

### Youth Clubs

In addition to the Youth Clubs we were already running, in October 2021 Newark were awarded a new contract by London Borough of Tower Hamlets to deliver youth clubs from three purpose built youth centres. By the close of the year we operated 6 different youth clubs from Bethnal Green, Limehouse, Stepney, Whitechapel and Wapping, engaging over 550 children & young people between 8-19 years old. With something on offer every day of the week, the clubs provide a safe place for children to meet, socialise and develop their life skills and experiences in an informal setting. The clubs offer a range of indoor and outdoor activities, sports, short courses & workshops, study support, and trips & residentials.

We delivered workshops on Substance Misuse, Online Safety, International Women's Day, Education, Employment & Training, Ramadan Healthy Eating and more. We delivered accredited courses and 45 young people completed Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work (35) and Level 2 Customer Service course (10).



### Outreach Programme

Aligned to our youth club offering, we delivered a new outreach project funded by Tower Hamlets Homes (THH). We delivered 10 outreach sessions per week in Stepney, Shadwell and Wapping area during the summer holidays. Following the summer period (Oct to Dec) we delivered 5 sessions per week until December 2021. We engaged over 200 young people from THH housing estates and surrounding areas.

### Holiday Programme

The school holiday programmes are an extension of the youth clubs and provide an opportunity to engage new children and young people to Newark and also to keep them occupied in positive activities during the school holidays, especially the long summer holidays.

In the summer of 2021 we delivered summer holiday programme from 3 different areas/locations in the borough. We delivered from Cable Street, Stepney Green Park and Locksley estate. Everyday for 5 weeks we provided hot lunches for all the children. The holiday programme also had a dedicated Covid-19 girls only sports project to encourage girls to come out and be active after long periods of lockdown. The girls engaged in BMX, outdoor sports, trips and Back to Nature activities.

In total, during the summer holiday we engaged over 200 children and young people. We delivered indoor & outdoor sessions, sports, basketball, football, badminton, cricket and day trips and community celebration days. Also 10 boys and 11 girls went on 2 separate, 4 days residential to Kingswood outdoor activity centre in Kent. Both groups participated in various individual and team challenges and this improved their confidence, motivation and life skills. For some it was the first time staying away from their families and they had to be independent and make decisions for themselves.



# NEWARK YOUTH LONDON LIMITED

## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

We also delivered similar programmes during October 2021 and February 2022 half term holidays. Crucially these programmes included lunch so that young people were assured of not going hungry during the day.



### AcE Futures

Our AcE Futures programme is aimed at young people aged 10 to 21 years old who are at risk or involved in youth crime and violence. This programme builds on our regular youth club and sports offering, and employment & training support. Young people are offered the chance to participate in specially designed workshops and undertake accredited courses. Participation earns young people rewards and recognises their determination to stay away from crime and violence. In 2021, we supported 293 young people with 47 completing the programme and 58 achieving an accredited course.



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## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

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### **Work It Hub**

The project was a response to Covid-19 impacting the education and employment prospects of young people in Tower Hamlets. The project targeted disadvantaged young people aged 14 to 25, helping them identify their future career options/pathways; improve their employability skills, help them access apprenticeships, courses or work experience and support them to move into paid employment or start their own business. The project delivered 1-2-1 mentoring to young people, helping improve confidence and linking them up with employers looking for staff. The project directly mentored 30 young people and supported over 100 young people during the year.

### **Girls in Action**

Girls in Action is about bringing girls together for social action, facilitating their passion and interest and supporting them to develop their confidence, skills and experiences. The project is co-designed with the girls, who are able to create their own social action projects based on their needs, learning and interests. Due to Covid-19 it was difficult to deliver the project fully, especially the social action element due to restrictions and wanting to keep everyone safe. Despite this, the project worked with 39 girls, with 32 girls completing ASDAN Leadership course and increasing lifeskills, becoming confident and resilient.

### **HeAT Healthy Active Together (HeAT)**

The project is aimed at supporting inactive people to become active and is targeted at the whole family and the community. The project delivered activities including women and girls only sessions, such as mother and daughter fitness class and girls' football, women's walking groups, youth football and father and son sessions such as badminton. Due to Covid-19 we could not deliver the activities as planned because of unavailability of venues and risks posed to everyone, especially to older and disabled people. We supported 149 new participants to take up a physical activity during the year and overall, 270 people benefited from the project.

### **Connect with Nature**

Directly in response to feedback from young people who wanted to reconnect with trees and open spaces after the lockdown, we secured funding to run a Connect with Nature programme in a new successful partnership with Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. The programme offered young people sessions, where they could spend a day "in the wild" foraging, outdoor cooking, den making, etc. and increased their understanding of sustainability.

### **Youth Voice & Leadership**

This project enabled us to recruit 18 young people to volunteer throughout the year with the emphasis in developing their leadership skills and capabilities so they can progress into becoming sessional youth workers and sports leaders. From the 18, 12 went to become our junior youth workers and 4 went on to join our youth board to become integral to the youth voice and decision making in the organisation.

### **Just Smiles Original**

The project has been engaging local young people and volunteers to provide winter packs to homeless people in London and other parts of the UK. The young people learn about the homeless community in London and show their support by raising money and buying winter packs for distribution.





# NEWARK YOUTH LONDON LIMITED

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### Jack Petchey Achievement Awards

Newark Youth London is enrolled on the Jack Petchey Achievement Award scheme and every year 9 young people are awarded £300 each to spend on their peers and for their youth clubs/football teams. The awards are designed to motivate and encourage young people to be positive and take responsibility for their action and behaviour.

### Newark Youth London Annual Awards Ceremony

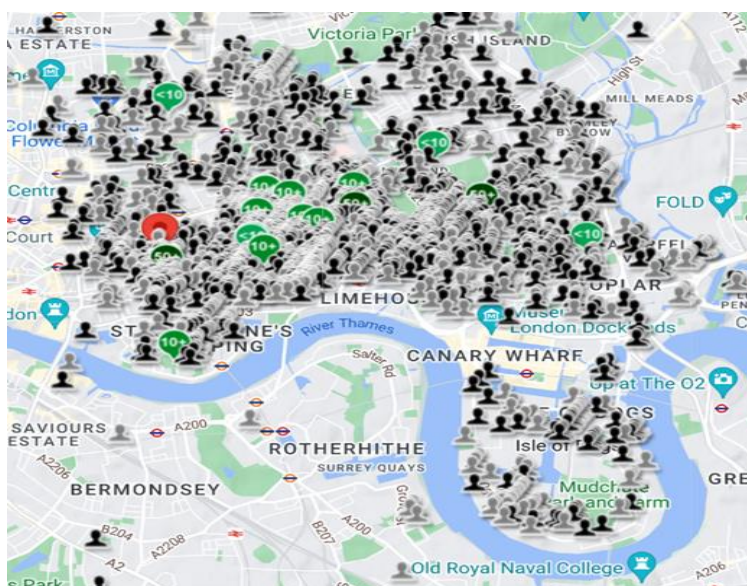
We delivered our annual awards ceremony for 400 children and their parents in May 2021, having not been able to run the event the previous year. This allowed us to celebrate and recognise the achievements of the children, young people and volunteers, and to encourage others to do the same in the future.



### Implementing Upshot recording system

A big change we implemented in the year was the use of Upshot recording system to keep records of all participants and activities. Although we did not use Upshot for the whole year for every project, the incomplete results for the year are non-the-less impressive. A map of attendees at Newark activities shows that we have a wide reach across the whole borough of Tower Hamlets.

During the year, we recorded in Upshot 1,337 individual participants, who attended on 8,304 occasions. We recorded 479 sessions delivered ranging from sports matches to 1-2-1 mentoring. Although this data does not capture everything we did during the year, it is helping us to have a better overall picture of the scale of our delivery and the number of people whose lives we impact across the borough. As the data in the system grows, it will help us to start gaining a greater insight into the journeys that individual participants take in their lives and the outcomes we support them to achieve.



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### Quality Standards

We maintained our FA Charter standard and Matrix quality standard for information, advice and guidance, both are renewed annually.

### OUR IMPACT

The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the young people we work with and their families during the year to 31 March 2022. Young people had been in lockdown for much of the previous year and this had consequence for their health (lack of physical exercise, in some case continued lack of access to food), their mental health (ranging from loss of confidence through to increased levels of anxiety) and their social skills (lack of being able to mix socially with anyone other than close family members). For some young people the disruption to their academic year had been extreme with some not being able to sit for key exams, whilst others had struggled to keep up academically when much of their teaching had been online.

Families struggled with the impact of loss and bereavement, long term health impacts of Covid-19, continued impact on availability of work as well as the same physical and mental health challenges experienced by young people. As we came out of the most severe restrictions, it felt like young people and their families needed the support provided by Newark Youth London more than ever.

Our focus has been to support young people to overcome the challenges they have experienced. This has primarily been through:

- Providing an extensive programme of youth club and football activities where young people can spend time in a safe place engaging in positive activities
- Delivering programmes aimed at supporting young peoples' personal development, including those at risk of dropping out of school, college or work
- Delivering employability skills to help young people to move into training and employment as many lost their jobs due to Covid-19
- Providing young people with new and enjoyable experiences that allow them to develop personally and try new things in new environments

### Football

Our football sessions were disrupted due to Covid-19 restrictions and young people were indoors without any exercise and seeing their friends. Many were delighted when we re-started our sessions in August 2021 and parents felt their children were losing the ability to communicate with others. Football is a popular sport, and we use it to engage young people into positive activities and keep them away from anti-social behaviour and crime. It develops their confidence and all the other life skills like communication, teamwork and resilience.

*X is a 14-year-old Bangladeshi male who registered for our Sunday football session at Stepney Green Astro pitch in August 2021. X is diagnosed with mild autism and has learning difficulty. His father was worried we would not accept him on our session and did not want to mention it in the registration form. The Sports Development Manager re-assured the father that we would not discriminate against his child, and we would do our best to accommodate him. X is given extra attention by our senior/experienced coaches to make him feel more comfortable in his surroundings and with his learnings. We have identified some exercises which are more tailored towards his ability. X is a very quiet and polite young person, who follows instructions very well and enjoys playing football. He is willing to learn but sometime can get little distracted. X is always on time and hasn't missed a session to date. He has motivation to improve and loves being part of his group and is very responsive to coaches' instructions. X is making steady progress and is clearly benefiting from attending the session.*

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### **Youth club**

Our youth clubs provide a safe space for young people to be after school and in the evenings and provide opportunity for them to learn and develop their skills and experiences. We provide information and support to help young people make positive life choices and support them to develop critical thinking and be resilient to the negative issues they come across in their daily lives. The clubs support young people to socially connect and develop their confidence and motivation. We challenge their thinking and encourage them to have ambition to fulfil their goals.

*J is a 13 year old young person who was referred to Newark by LBTH's "Breaking the Cycle" violence reduction project. J has a hard time communicating with his peers and adults which is affecting his behaviour in school and at home. Before being referred to Newark J, had 1-2-1 with his key worker and he would play basketball in the sports hall on his own. After registering, he now attends the youth club regularly and started to make friends with other young people who play basketball too.*

*As J struggles with behavioural issues, he enjoys the challenging aspect of playing basketball with other young people who also hold a competitive streak. Basketball has enabled J to tackle his attitude and behaviour by allowing him to explore his anger through sports.*

*Since attending Newark, J has taken part in the February half term programme. The programme had various sports that appealed to J such as football and badminton. This has boosted J's positive behaviour as he then started attending Newark's football sessions on Friday evening. J is a regular participant at the youth hub engaging in different games with other young people.*

*It is evident that J is very competitive and looks for appraisal. He likes to challenge young people and staff in games and likes to have fun with his friends. He continues to attend the youth hub and staff have approached J to see his interests in workshops and training for FA level 1 in Football and Basketball Level 1 course as he has shown keen interest. J has now opened up to engaging with the rest of the young people that attend the youth hub as he has become familiar with them as well as staff. He engages more in the games room playing pool, table tennis, table football and video games.*

*The programme has brought J closer to other young people from his school and those similar in age. J is a pleasant and kind individual and despite his behavioural problems he has not displayed any violent/disruptive behaviour in the youth hub so far.*

### **Holiday Programmes**

Youth work is challenging, and our holiday programmes have additional challenges where we are trying to deliver in new outdoor areas in the local community. Sometimes the facilities are not great, and space has to be shared with others. In some instances, we have had to work with enforcement agencies to address drug dealers trying to sell drugs to young people and staff. However, the programmes offer young people a lifeline to engaging in positive activities and staying out of trouble in the school holidays.

*X – 14 year old male who recently arrived in the UK with his family. He has limited number of friends and has limited access to sports or recreation. We engaged X when he was passing by Christian Street multi sports pitch. We invited him to come and join in our sports activities and try out non-contact boxing. X later brought his 2 friends and they had difficulty making friends with the other children due to them newly arriving in the country and having limited English. They lacked confidence and were afraid of the local children who were born in the UK. We gave X and his friends the opportunity to engage in the project and build up their confidence to play/get to know the other young people. They started to mingle with the others, and we invited them to come to the youth club in Christian Street. They are now attending regularly and now join in the youth club activities and make friends with the other young people.*



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## TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

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### AcE Futures

In this project our delivery was hampered by staff turnover and sickness during the first 6 months of the year. However, in the second half of the year the project was able to swing into full action, and 73 young people were recruited onto the programme.

Feedback from 26 out of 30 respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have increased confidence to a) feel good about themselves, b) feel confident to be themselves and not feel under pressure to be like others, and c) have increased confidence to make things happen rather than wait for someone to do it for them and to have respect for themselves and others. 100% of the respondents told us they had more respect for themselves and others after completing the programme.

- *"My confidence has increased a lot because before I did the programme, I was shy about giving my opinion or talking to new people but now I like talking and engaging in conversation with others and sharing my own opinion"*
- *"At first I wasn't keen on taking big challenges as I feared that I wouldn't like it but after the trips and activities, I learned that even if I didn't want to do something, I should try because I might end up enjoying it"*
- *"When I originally started this programme, I was very uncomfortable with different people and didn't like to be honest about my feelings and if people made me uncomfortable. After this programme has finished however, I realised I have a more positive mindset and outlook on education and different opportunities even when things aren't going my way. I still struggle a bit to speak in front of others, but I have noticed that I am less reluctant to do so. This programme really helped me."*
- *"Recently I was offered a chance to be my classes student representative. However, I would decline every year due to lack of self-confidence no matter how much other people encouraged me to run. But this year, I decided to push myself and do it. I didn't end up being the student rep, but I am now the deputy student rep and I do not regret applying as I have gotten many opportunities to speak for my class and share my thoughts of improvement for my school."*

21 respondents had volunteered – one had undertaken outreach and had promoted Newark to new people they had not met before, and another found volunteering at their church stretched their skills because they had to work with people of different age groups. Another had volunteered doing fundraising which they felt stretched them to look at real life issues and try to find a way to help.

*X is 18 year old male - a bright young individual who did exceptionally well in his A-levels. From June onwards he was sitting at home and had so much free time on his hand. He did not engage in sports or other extracurricular activities and only engaged in things he liked. His parents were worried he may follow in the footsteps of his older brother, who is now involved in the drug distribution business. He still stays with the family and the parents were afraid his influence will rub onto the younger sibling as he sees the easy money, flash car, friends and the lifestyle. His father brought X to Newark. We asked X to volunteer and see if he liked the different sessions we were running. X registered and soon joined our Youth Leadership programme. He started volunteering every week and really engaged in the summer project volunteering nearly every day for the whole month of August. He made some new friends with the other leadership programme participants and somehow, he did not quit and his father had expected.*

*He completed an introduction to youth work course and did part volunteering and part worked as a sessional youth worker in our outdoor detached project. He developed his employability skills, timekeeping, taking instructions from senior staff, completing tasks and engaging young people. He became a valuable member of our leadership programme and our junior staff team. Towards the end of December, we had to make a decision on how many of our junior staff to keep for next year and X was one of 6 we decided to keep. He has grown in confidence, enjoys his time working and volunteering at Newark and he had made positive relations with other young people and adults. His parents are pleased that he got involved in positive activities and has found new friends, activities and something he likes doing. He has also enrolled into first year of university and they are no longer afraid he would follow his older brother.*

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### Work It Hub

The pandemic meant many young people who were working lost their jobs, others were uncertain about their chances of securing a job, unconfident about their academic record and experiencing low motivation. Through the Work-it Hub young people were supported to create individual action plans to help them identify their short, medium and long term career goals. They were given advice on options and supported to build their portfolio of skills and qualifications. As well as the 1-2-1 support we delivered 14 workshops covering topics such as CV writing, interview skills, confidence building and linked in with a number of external education and training providers. Young people were also alerted to job and training opportunities and assisted to make applications.

The project far exceeded its target numbers, providing support to 106 people in total, 90 of whom were new to Newark Youth London. Of these, 50 young people received additional support through 1-2-1 mentoring. 16 young people got the opportunity to volunteer to develop their skills and experience and 56 young people attended a careers fair, giving them access to employers and training providers. 16 young people secured employment as a result of the support including receptionists, private tutors, marketing assistant, nursery assistance and youth workers, and 39 young people gained accredited awards.

The project will enable us to advocate for young people facing challenging employment situations, and has allowed us to build new positive relationships, such as with Canary Wharf Group. However, the challenge remains, with young people often the first to be made redundant and needing continued support to sustain their engagement in jobs after they have started.

### Girls in Action

Girls are supported to develop skills like writing letters and emails, presentation skills, promoting projects, working in a team, taking the lead, doing research, etc. This leads to the girls delivering a social action project using the learning from the first part of the programme.

The first cohort of 20 girls chose to focus on improving their communication skills through Skillsbuilder and delivering social action by fundraising for Women's Aid. As lockdown restrictions eased, the girls were offered special sessions to have private use of the youth club facilities. They have really enjoyed having privileged access and the sense of security when attending the centre and tried new activities which they would otherwise not have been confident in attempting. Each week you can see their confidence and personality grow. 12 girls participated in BMX riding at Langdon Park - for many it was the first time they had the opportunity try out BMX riding and many travelling independently to a new venue/activity outside of school.

16 girls completed the ASDAN Level 2 Leadership course. The course challenged the girls to think about current issues and social problems such as Covid, toxic masculinity, child labour, equality and racism. The girls put into practice what they had learnt from previous workshops and great progress was made by all of them and this was reflected by peer feedback. They created posters and presented their findings with a lively debate at the end of the session, centred on the reasons for and against the death penalty.

Baseline questionnaires showed that 86% of the girls were not confident/neutral when meeting new people. From their post baseline questionnaires, we can see that most of the girls were confident when meeting new people now compared to their initial pre baseline. Previously, the girls outlined that they have never taken part in community activities, however it is now evident that the girls are confident in engaging with community activities. The girls have also shown confidence by partaking in courses and trips and engaging with girls from other schools.

The second cohort of 18 girls were introduced to Unifrog which participants utilised to develop their education/career pursuits. This platform supports users in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools that are suitable for young people and information related to their interests and aspirations which are accessible through their unique personal accounts.

We focussed on Online confidence as participants indicated that they were not familiar with writing emails or composing formal letters and also, they would like to learn about opportunities for work experience. As a result of the programme a number of girls were confident enough to apply for Young Mayor and some slept out at the Tower of London for a night in aid of homelessness.

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*J's parents were anxious about her participating in out of school activities but were reassured by the staff supervision and programme. Girls in Action has been a breath of fresh air for J who struggles to mix with students in school and form friendships. She has really excelled during the programme and now confidently speaks with her peers and staff.*

*Y suffers from anxiety and gets bullied at school. Y identifies as non-binary as such faces a lot of challenges from peers. Y has opened up about how she struggles to go to school due to fear of being picked on for being different and thinking differently to others. Y signed up for Girls in Action as they felt it would be something different and being in a smaller group of participants would mean less likelihood of being bullied. Y has commented on how much she enjoys the sessions and thinks the others are non-judgemental and not like her other peers. Y has really come out of her shell in the sessions.*

### **HeAT Healthy Active Together (HeAT)**

Staff report that participants say the engagement they feel when they attend this session enables them to socially, emotionally and physically connect with other people and makes them feel much better via face-to-face interaction and they sense that people do care for them and they are not isolated. Examples include two elderly participants who have recently moved to Tower Hamlets from the north who said this was a great way for them to meet new people from the community. Since moving here for the past few month's, they have only spoken to their neighbour. 50% of all participants in the HeAT programme report an increase in energy and a decrease in social isolation.

*X, a young person with a learning disability attends our Saturday Father and Son Session every week with his older brother who is his carer. Initially X was reluctant to participate in the activities and watched from the side as his friends would participate. X had low confidence and would only take part when staff were present and supported him and gave encouragement. He would stop participating if staff were not present and return to the side to watch. Staff have noticed this and tried to keep an eye on him as much as possible and looked to get him involve more. From a reserved, shy person with low confidence, X has become a more confident and motivated person as a result of participating in the programme. He attends every session and now takes part in the activities with others and his friends. Staff have developed a good relationship with him and mentored him and as a result it has been observed his confidence and motivation has increased. He is learning new skills and getting better and as a result he is now joining the activities more.*

The women attending our HeAT walking group session reported they appreciated the activities were timed so they could meet just after they dropped their children at school, and they felt the activities released the stress and pressure of daily life. Particularly following on from Covid lockdown restrictions, the women reported feeling liberated and connected.

### **Connect to Nature**

We planned for 36 participants to undertake 2 sessions each over 6 sessions with a wide range of woodland activities. The programme was seriously disrupted due to the park being closed due to an incident and then Storm Eunice in February 2022. Although the incidents prevented us running the programme in full, the young people really rated the programme.

All of the participants live in neighbourhoods which are in the bottom third of the ranking of Indices of Multiple Deprivation, of which 7 participants live in neighbourhoods in the bottom ranked 20% of neighbourhoods, so having an experience like this can be really special.

- 93% said they learned new skills (there are some examples below)
- 57% felt their teamwork skills improved
- 50% said their communication skills improved
- 57% said they enjoyed being outdoors, which included 43% who gave a top score to this question and obviously enjoyed the activity a lot. However, 21% didn't enjoy the experience of being outdoors
- 72% reported that their worries or stress reduced as a result of being on the trip, which appears to be a really important outcome

Young people reported their favourite activities included using the axe and knife to do whittling, making a fire and cooking S'mores on it, setting up a hammock and making a slingshot.



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Some examples included:

*"I enjoyed cooking smores at the fire pit and looking for logs. It reminded me of Bangladesh."*

*"Making smores and find big walking sticks to carve into beautiful sculptures"*

*"Knife and woodwork. I enjoyed using the medium axe because there was more control."*

*"Learning how to navigate myself through woods"*

*"I improved by outdoor skills and learned new survival skills"*

9 out of the 14 asked for more activities to be put on or have the chance to participate again. One young person told us that they saw taking part in the connect with nature programme as a key part of their personal development saying,

*"In back to nature I had to do many things that I normally wouldn't do and it helped me learn new skills."*

As a result of the positive experience this programme gave young people, we have successfully secured funding from City Bridge Trust to run a larger programme starting in September 2022.

### **Youth Voice and Leadership**

This is an area we want to improve on and create future leaders for the organisation and the community. We want our young people to be the voice of the organisation and be involved in the key decision making for the organisation. We created the platform for young people to have that opportunity in the organisation by recruiting 18 young people as leaders and developing them, and a smaller number later joining the youth board. This year 4 young people joined the youth board and they met regularly with senior staff and later did a presentation for the trustee board on what they would like to see Newark improve in the future. Our plan is to improve this mechanism so there is regular feedback to the trustee board and young people are embedded in every aspect of the organisations decision making going forward.

### **OUR PERFORMANCE**

Newark Youth London's long standing focus on steady growth and sustainability has enabled the charity to weather the financial and other challenges experienced during the global Covid-19 pandemic. This has meant we have experienced financial stability, and are working hard to continue our fundraising efforts to maintain all our existing services and projects. We have deliberately maintained low overheads and utilities costs, thus able to sustain until March 2023. We have not had to draw on our reserves during the pandemic.

Delivering our programmes for young people has not always been easy given the immense challenges experienced during the year as a result of the pandemic, but we have continued to deliver on our existing funded programmes supported by our funders and partners.

We were very excited this year to be able to secure new additional funding and run further programmes during the year including:

- The Work It Hub funded by London Community Response Fund for one year. Based on the success of this first year we have subsequently secured two further years' funding for this programme. The Work-It Hub will support young people with their concerns about employability, given they have missed so much time at school and they feel that the job market will be fiercely competitive as a result of the pandemic
- Connect with Nature – a short term project funded by Tower Hill Trust which was so well received by the young people we have now successfully secured funding from City Bridge Trust to run a more extensive programme for 1 years
- Funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation to employ a young person on a special one-year internship programme as part of the Jack Petchey internship programme. Employing an Engagement Intern allowed us to both intensively support the development and career potential of a young person but also to invest in developing our youth voice, parent voice and enhance our approach to digital communications and media