

First commissioned in 2012, the Good Neighbours Scheme is a successful community wellbeing project delivered by Help On Your Doorstep on Islington's New River Green estate.

Funded by the Integrated Care Board, Islington Council and other voluntary, community and social enterprise partners, the project improves residents' health and wellbeing, supports them to thrive and helps build a more resilient community.

Based at the Walter Sickert Community Centre in the heart of the estate, the project offers a range of activities and can refer residents to support from a number of community services for issues such as employment, housing, financial problems and more. A wide range of activities benefitting residents' physical and mental health includes:

- Exercise classes for all ages
- Chair-based exercise sessions
- Community coffee mornings
- Arts and crafts sessions
- Football club for children
- Gardening club
- Community fun days
- Health and wellbeing promotion days

By connecting residents with one another and signposting to community services, the project builds local networks, addresses issues such as isolation and financial hardship, and in doing so develops our understanding of local needs and priorities. Insights are gathered by collecting data via an online database and at community reference groups, facilitating focus groups, collecting survey responses, and capturing resident stories and quotes. To support people in having a good quality of life, the project seeks to ensure that residents:

- Have the skills, knowledge and confidence to achieve their goals
- Participate in activities that improve their wellbeing
- Have good access to support networks
- Are supported by high-quality services
- Are positive about themselves
- Work together for the common good.

Volunteers are integral to the project's success. With activities often led by residents and volunteers, many who attend go on to become volunteers. As such, residents have a real stake in the planning, development and delivery of activities and initiatives.

The team work diligently to reach diverse communities by doing pro-active and accessible community outreach. They don't wait for residents to find the project, but rather go directly to residents' homes and see how they can support them to overcome barriers and to connect them to local services and activities.

The positive impact on residents' health and wellbeing is apparent in just a few testimonials:

- "My son goes to the football club he really enjoys it that makes me happy"
- "This is a vital network in the community and I hope you continue to support the Good Neighbours Scheme"

- “They have been a lifeline with their help. Someone to talk to in the difficult times and it’s good to have some sort of routine in my life mentally and physically. I would be lost without the new river good neighbour scheme”

Positive outcomes of the Good Neighbours Scheme include the improved health, wellbeing and quality of life of local residents, reduced inequalities in the community, the strengthened quality of services on offer to residents, and community organisations learning to work collectively towards a common objective.

As work progresses throughout the year, we will bring you updates on the different aspects of the project. For further information [please visit our website](#).

