

# ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14







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# Chair's Intro.

When North London Cares was established in 2011, we were experimenting. We saw the isolation and loneliness of our older neighbours, and felt the disjointedness of our community. We saw the potential in the enthusiasm and social mindedness of mobile young professionals living and working nearby. We also had experience of reaching and mobilising young people through digital campaigns. So we thought – and hoped – if we brought these things together, we'd be able to make a difference.

Since then, North London Cares has gone from an idea to a couple of Social Clubs to an established charity recruiting 840 young people to support 1,000 older neighbours. We have attracted interest from The Times to the One Show, and secured support from trusts and foundations, businesses and individuals. And we have gone from a completely voluntary organisation to employing 3 full time members of staff, with plans for more. Most importantly, we have proved our concept, and if the feedback from our neighbours, volunteers and funders wasn't enough, the figures on pages 16 and 17 give us confidence that we are making a real impact.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to our generation will be how we care for our parents in old age. With an ageing population, increasing diversification and shrinking budgets, this challenge will become more stark. We believe our type of community engagement provides a new model to help: with a tiny amount

of money, we can mobilise hundreds of volunteers to support hundreds of older neighbours. And we see every day that if only we were bigger, we could do more to reduce isolation and increase companionship in our community.

So this year the board has focused on three themes: sustainability, innovation and making the biggest impact.

## **Sustainability**

We want North London Cares to continue its good work long into the future. In fact, we have built so much interest and confidence in our model that we have established a sister charity – South London Cares – south of the river, which is already thriving. To grow sustainably, we have:

- Professionalised our governance processes and our board. In addition, we have actively sought out new board members (particularly with finance expertise) to help our ongoing professionalisation over the coming years;
- Invested in analysing, improving and documenting our internal systems and processes;
- Recruited "Organisers" – experienced volunteers who arrange events and Social Clubs with minimal support from our staff – to be able to do more with less;
- Developed our policies, for example on risk management and HR.

# Chair's Intro continued

## Innovation

North London Cares began with an innovative way of reaching, recruiting and interacting with new volunteers. As believers in innovation, we are always challenging ourselves to deliver our work in new ways and to try new ideas. This year we:

- Created our "Hidden Heroes" project of six short films exploring and celebrating the diversity of our older neighbours' lives in Camden and Islington, which had over 8,000 views online and received local and national media coverage;
- Delivered a plethora of different Social Clubs – from dancing and gardening sessions to Grand National parties – based on the fantastic ideas of our volunteers and older neighbours.

## Making the biggest impact

Although we count the number of social interactions we create and the number of hours volunteered, these numbers do not adequately reflect the impact that we make. That impact can't always be counted. This year we have focused not just on the quantity of social interactions, but the quality. So we have:

- Worked with volunteers to ensure they get the right support and training;
- Signed off an evaluation of our work to make sure we're having the deepest possible impact;

- Done more to listen, and respond, to our older neighbours' needs, interests and passions.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in helping North London Cares help our older neighbours to feel more valued, vibrant and visible: our funders, our staff, and most of all, our volunteers.



**Josie Cluer**  
Chair

# CEO's Intro.

It's five years now since I knocked on a neighbour's door, in May 2010. It was general election day, and I was encouraging people to vote. Behind one door, in Tufnell Park, an older gentleman told me he would love to be able to get out, but that he had no friends and family around to escort him.

Fred, it turned out, hadn't been out of his house in three months. As I wheeled him to the voting place he told me that, because his hair had become long and greasy in the time he'd been indoors, he felt he'd lost his dignity.

The next day, I took him for a haircut. It seemed like a tiny gesture. But what struck me most wasn't that, through one small interaction, Fred had been able to improve his circumstances – although he had. What struck me most was that Fred and I had things in common. We'd both been going to the same barber for years. We both loved Sinatra and the Rat Pack. And, most excitingly for me, Fred was the founder of Escapade, a fancy dress shop in Camden Town that I'd loved since I was a kid.

Sadly, Fred's story is not unique. Isolation and loneliness amongst older people are growing challenges for our communities – particularly in our big cities, where globalisation, gentrification, migration, digitisation and increasing house prices are rapidly changing previously familiar communities, perpetuating the loss and anxiety that many people over the age of 65 can feel.

As well as a social challenge, this is also a healthcare crisis. The biggest generation in history is about to reach retirement age, right at a time when people are living longer than ever and the pensions and welfare systems designed to afford people dignity in later life are creaking under pressure. Meanwhile, loneliness has been shown to be as bad for people's health as obesity, or smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

**“The best thing about them is the young people. I'll be feeling a bit low some days, but as soon as I get to the film club it passes. I look forward to it all week, if I'm honest. They're giving up their time for you. It gives you that little bit more hope.”**  
Ethel, 80

# CEO's Intro continued

North London Cares' aim is to tackle this isolation at the root, with a dynamic, proactive community network that brings people together who might not normally interact – young professionals who most closely represent those drastically changing communities and their older, more established neighbours – for the benefit of all.

2013/14 has been an amazing time to be part of that effort. We're so proud that, over the past year, our volunteers have hosted 266 Social Clubs in Camden and Islington, and enjoyed well over 12,000 interactions with older neighbours, including nearly 900 one-to-one hours.

The last year has also been one of growth. We've added two new team members, our budgets have increased and we've mobilised more volunteers to spend time with more older neighbours than ever before. We were also chuffed to release our Hidden Heroes series of six short films celebrating the lives, personalities, relationships and adventures of seven of the older neighbours our volunteers value so much.

And perhaps most excitingly, we've now opened up our brand new sister charity, South London Cares. SLC is already working in Southwark and Lambeth to bring older and younger neighbours together through a unique blend of Dinner Parties, Baking Clubs and other welcoming, fun interactions. If you're below the river, we'd love you to be part of it.

As we look to the future, our aim is to consolidate, and to make North London Cares' growth as sustainable and manageable as possible. In 2015, we will be adding another member of staff to help us devise new ways of fundraising. We'll be expanding our Organisers project, which enables our most committed volunteers to do more. And we'll be connecting older neighbours and volunteers in Camden and Islington in loads of newly imaginative, involving, relatable ways.

We're so grateful for everyone's support on that exciting journey. From funders to partners to our wonderful volunteers – we couldn't do this without you, and we're really looking forward to working with you more over the coming year. Onwards.

**Alex Smith**  
Chief Executive



**“North London Cares has changed how we look at life. You've got twenty and twenty-five year olds here, giving up their free time. It would never have happened in our day, and it's transformed our view of the younger generation. I suddenly feel able to engage with them.”**

**Fred, 85**

# Vision.

North London Cares is a community network mobilising young professionals to volunteer to support their older neighbours with a little extra time, practical help, social connection and human companionship.

Our work aims to tackle the growing problem of isolation and loneliness on our doorsteps – not just amongst older people but also amongst young Londoners; to help improve the confidence, resilience and skills of all participants so that neighbours can navigate a rapidly changing world; and to bring people together across long-standing social and generational divides.

We do this because north London is a place of social extremes. The boroughs in which we work, Camden and Islington, contain some of the best connected people in Britain – high-flying graduates working in finance, law, PR, and media – as well as some of the most isolated, with particular challenges to do with

deprivation, anxiety, depression and loneliness amongst older people. Often, these two groups live side by side but hardly ever interact. That wastes human potential, perpetuates social division and is ultimately corrosive for our society.

Clearly, in a city like ours, young professionals who have arrived from all over the UK and all over the world, and retired local people who have often lived here for a lifetime, have so much to gain from one another – in friendship, knowledge, humour and wisdom.

That's why our tagline is "connecting people, building communities", and that's why our vision is to grow a lasting, inclusive network that improves the life experiences of all participants – older and younger neighbours – by deploying the cultural, economic and human assets of the local community to build relationships between people who live on each other's doorsteps but may not naturally interact.



# Overview.

**840**

North London Cares' community network now consists of some 840 young professional volunteers

Those volunteers have worked with 1,000 older neighbours in 3 years

**1,000**

**266**

In 2013/2014 North London Cares' volunteers hosted 266 Social Clubs

They gave 3,991 hours in Camden and Islington to support their older neighbours

**3,991**

# 12,829

Together those participants created 12,829 new interactions

And they shared 853 one-to-one hours, often in people's homes

# 853

# 2,763

2,763 meals were shared in locations across our target boroughs



**“Exactly the right approach at exactly the right time in a city that needs it.”**

**Anthony Painter,  
social researcher**

# Core Projects.

North London Cares operates through two core projects which, together with our Winter Warmth project (see page 13), provide the main activities of our community network.

## Social Clubs

Our Social Clubs provide an anchor of interactive group activities for older people to look forward to – hosted, facilitated and jointly attended by the young professionals – including film and storytelling nights, new technologies workshops, afternoon tea parties, games and quiz nights, business visits, dance sessions, locally-themed parties and more.

Social Clubs occur 4-6 times per week across Camden and Islington, and in various locations including community centres, cafes, pubs, parks, local businesses and youth clubs.

They offer a chance for older neighbours and young professionals to come together, to share time, new experiences and cultural exchange, and to build familiarity and meaningful new relationships. And they bring the vibrancy and culture of our capital city back into to our older neighbours' lives.

## Love Your Neighbour

Meanwhile, our Love Your Neighbour project matches our family of younger volunteers to individual, often housebound, older neighbours, to provide a little practical support around the home, such as gardening or shopping, as well as that all important company and companionship.

Volunteers may visit their older neighbours once or twice a fortnight to catch up over a cup of tea or a natter about Eastenders. Friends will often also talk regularly over the phone, at lunchtime, after work or on the weekends, when young professionals have spare time and older neighbours can often feel most isolated.

Through these two schemes, integrated with our innovative annual Winter Warmth project, we aim to help neighbours meet their social, practical and emotional needs holistically with the support of that network of trusted young people.



# Special Projects.

## Winter Warmth

In the winter of 2013/2014 North London Cares' core teams and our volunteers delivered our third major winter project in three years, helping our older neighbours in Camden and Islington to stay warm, active, healthy and connected during one of the most isolating time of the year.

The campaign lasted for four months, during which time our teams:

- ♥ **Knocked on the doors of 2,396 older people's homes in Camden and Islington;**
- ♥ **Held doorstep conversations with 1,360 older neighbours;**
- ♥ **Distributed 17 grants totaling £2,500 to help our neighbours most in need;**
- ♥ **Made 192 deeper interventions to support the most vulnerable people;**
- ♥ **Referred 106 cases of isolation to the relevant local authority;**
- ♥ **Delivered blankets, coats, jumpers or socks to 40 older neighbours;**
- ♥ **Delivered 18 hampers full of winter goodies;**
- ♥ **Delivered and decorated 4 Christmas trees for older neighbours who couldn't get out of the house;**
- ♥ **Partnered with 79 health, voluntary and business sector organisations, including GP surgeries, pubs, shops, chemists and libraries, to further identify isolation.**

**“Optimism, passion and an ability to make things happen;  
a really important working model.”**

**Lynne Berry MBE, Chair, Commission on Ageing in the Voluntary Sector**

# Special Projects.

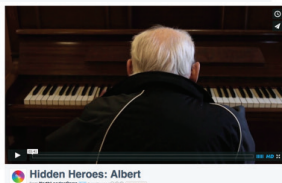
## HIDDEN HEROES

This year we wanted to do something original to celebrate the lives, personalities, passions and friendships of some of the amazing older neighbours living and contributing to their communities in Camden and Islington. Many have lived here their whole lives; each has a unique story to tell, about family, friendship and the place they call home.

The films were produced by North London Cares and made by our talented friend Tim Marrinan. They were launched in March 2014 with a

Premiere in Finsbury Park attended by 60 guests, including the stars of the films and the Mayor and Leader of Islington Council. They were then released week by week by our media partners, The KentishTowner.

Over a few months, the films were watched over 8,000 times online. They became social media hits, were featured in The Times and various local blogs and were tweeted by Stephen Fry.



# Ruth, 90

“I started to get a bit unfulfilled. I’m someone who needs mental stimulation, but as I got older I couldn’t seem to find it. I found myself getting apathetic. I’m not great with crowds, so I was staying at home and becoming less engaged with life.



Then, one day in December, I got a knock on the door from a young man. He offered help with the cold weather, which I didn’t need, but we got to talking and I explained how I was feeling.

To cut a long story short, I ended up being put in touch with Helen – a lady in her 20s who lives close by. Now she comes round once a week for a cup of tea. Her visits give life that added bit of interest. Helen lives a very different life to me, working in a high-powered job in the City. Her coming round is a chance to learn about her life and for her to learn about mine. She brings in part of the outside world that I’ve lost touch with, and now I feel like I’m part of the world again.”

# Impact.

In October 2014 North London Cares published our first comprehensive impact evaluation, funded by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The research demonstrated the impact of our work over the three years since NLC was founded in 2011.

Our 130-page impact report demonstrated how:

Half (51%) of NLC's older neighbours are over 80 years old, and two thirds (67%) live alone;

Two thirds (68%) of the older neighbours NLC works with have had low wellbeing since getting older - of these almost 40% say lack of social contact is the main barrier;

Before participating with NLC, older neighbours were nearly 4 times more likely than the national average (10%) to feel lonely (37%); but 73% say they now feel less isolated as a result of their interactions through NLC;

52% say NLC has made them more self-confident and secure in their area;

77% of older neighbours surveyed say their interactions through NLC have improved their relations with young people, with the most positive impact occurring among those who started out with low opinions of young people;

76% of older neighbours say NLC has given them access to a greater range of experiences;

86% of older neighbours feel more able to appreciate the world;

81% of older neighbours feel better connected to people;

24% of NLC's older neighbours almost never go to social activities apart from NLC's.

These statistics show the value of a trusted community network. Interestingly, 41% of older neighbours said they continue to participate with NLC because of the presence of younger people – the second most commonly cited reason for returning regularly – despite the fact that only 19% initially came for this reason.

**“You know what I was like before coming to these clubs – I was lonely. It’s made my life.”**  
Audrey, 82

Meanwhile, it is clear from the study that the benefits run both ways:

**Regular volunteers were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences, with 98% strongly agreeing they had been able to contribute in a way they otherwise would not because of NLC;**

**98% of regular volunteers “strongly agreed” that they had a greater connection to community thanks to volunteering through NLC;**

**97% of volunteers strongly felt that they were more able to appreciate older people as a result of volunteering with NLC.**



# Coverage.

**THE Irish Post** May 2014

**itv NEWS** October 2013



A screenshot of a tweet from Stephen Fry (@stephenfry) dated May 2014. The tweet text reads: "Here's Johnny! Wonderful short film about a 75 year old London cabby still at the heart of his community: [bit.ly/1oQ6ESU](http://bit.ly/1oQ6ESU)". Below the tweet is a video player for a Vimeo video titled "Hidden Heroes: Johnny" from NorthLondonCares. The video player shows a man in a dark jacket sitting in a taxi cab. The video player interface includes a play button, a progress bar, and the text "07:14 HD :: vimeo".

February  
2014



February 2014



May 2014



April 2014

Commission on the  
Voluntary Sector & Ageing -  
August 2014

Public Health England -  
October 2013

Centre Forum -  
April 2014

# Fundraising.

**N**orth London Cares is so grateful for the ongoing support of our funders and supporters. They range from local authorities to trusts and foundations to individual donors both within and beyond the volunteer network itself. We couldn't do any of this work without them, and we are proud that they have chosen to invest in our vision.

Major funders and their investments include:

## Camden Council

Innovation and Development Fund	£25,000
Winter Warmth commission	£7,000
Equalities & Cohesion grant	£17,500

## Islington Council

Winter Warmth commission	£10,000
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## Bulldog Trust

Development grant	£9,000
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## Islington Giving

Confronting Isolation grant	£5,000
Saturday Socials grant	£11,000

## Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Development grant	£20,000
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## London Community Foundation

The Reel Fund	£3,000
The Dodds Fund	£5,000

## The Sobell Foundation

Core grant	£14,000
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## The Mercer's Company

Core grant	£10,000
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## Mondelez International

Partnership donation	£10,000
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## Other

Small donations	£3,575
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**TOTAL** **£150,075**

**“The best thing  
I’ve heard in  
years.”**  
Attendee at the  
Campaign to  
End Loneliness  
conference

# People.

**N**orth London Cares is a full time organisation run by a voluntary board of trustees and supported by various advisers. It is our core team, however, that are the heart and soul of what we do. They work day-to-day to devise and deliver the projects and partnerships that connect our family of older and younger neighbours and build communities in north London. Our office is in Camden Town UnLimited's Collective hub, right in the heart of our community. Come and visit us sometime!



**Alex Smith** is founder and Chief Executive of North London Cares and runs day-to-day operations including fundraising, finance and strategy. He was formerly an aide to the Leader of the Labour Party, Ed Miliband, and editor of one of the most successful political websites in the UK. Alex is a north Londoner born and raised. He is a governor at Holloway School and was a "Welcome the World" volunteer in Camden during the 2012 Olympics. He has been awarded two UnLtd social enterprise awards for his work founding North London Cares in 2011 and South London Cares in 2014.



**Laura Woodley** is North London Cares' Programme Coordinator. She is responsible for creating and delivering our work – especially the Social Clubs – on the ground, recruiting and mobilising volunteers and matching them to their older neighbours in lots of exciting, creative and varied ways. Laura previously worked at a nursing and rehabilitation home for disabled servicemen, and before that in television production.



**Jessica Ellis** is North London Cares' Projects Officer. She is responsible in particular for managing our Love Your Neighbour project. Before joining NLC, Jessica developed a charity in north London called Engage Events to promote meaningful social interactions within care. Jessica has also worked for the Alzheimer's Society, running peer support services. She joined North London Cares in August 2014.

**"Cutting edge." Kristina Glenn, Cripplegate Foundation**

# Plans.

**N**orth London Cares is an ambitious organisation. We hope we can influence the changing voluntary sector by continuing to build a volunteer network that is inclusive, and that older neighbours and young professionals alike can relate to and participate in on their own terms.

Our immediate objective over the next year, therefore, is to improve what we do. We want to give more older neighbours even more personalised interactions that help to improve their life experience. We want to sharpen how we communicate with our family of volunteers with new text and email interactions – and to build a local network that people truly feel they own.

That means that, over the coming year, we will be devising new ways to get young professionals involved – with tiered volunteering at the

heart of our offer. We will also be developing new ways that young people can fundraise for North London Cares – through their own social and professional networks which in turn will help us to grow our profile, raise new income and reach more people.

We also want to give power away so that younger and older neighbours can create more interactions autonomously, on their own terms. We will therefore accelerate our Organisers programme – helping our most dedicated volunteers to do more to support neighbours in their own ways.

We will also aim to learn from – and capitalise on – the experience of building South London Cares below the river. As we look to our sister charity, we will discover new ways of working and we will hope to benefit from the increased profile opportunities of sibling charities in sibling communities.



# Finances.

## NL CARES LIMITED

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2014

	Note	Unrest ricted Funds £	Rest ricted Funds £	Total 2014 £	Total 2013 £
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>					
<b>Incoming Resources</b>	2	15,369	136,866	<b>152,235</b>	102,929
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Direct charitable expenditure	3	9,643	111,008	<b>120,651</b>	69,766
Fundraising and publicity	4	-	5,110	<b>5,110</b>	1,412
Charity management and administration	5	5,308	-	<b>5,308</b>	2,834
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	6	14,951	116,118	<b>131,069</b>	74,012
<b>Net Incoming Resources before Transfers</b>		418	20,748	<b>21,166</b>	28,917
<b>Net Incoming Resources for the year Other Recognised Gains and Losses</b>		418	20,748	<b>21,166</b>	28,917
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>		418	20,748	<b>21,166</b>	28,917
<b>Fund Balances forward at 31 August 2014</b>	10	418	20,748	<b>21,166</b>	28,917

# Finances.

## NL CARES LIMITED

### BALANCE SHEET AT 31 AUGUST 2014

	Note	£	2014 £	2013 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible assets	7		1,531	1,151
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors	8	374		364
Cash at bank and in hand		70,540		45,138
			<u>70,914</u>	<u>45,502</u>
<b>CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	<b>7,706</b>		<b>3,081</b>
			<u>63,208</u>	<u>42,421</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
			<u>64,738</u>	<u>43,571</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
			<u>64,738</u>	<u>43,571</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
General funds	10		<u>64,738</u>	<u>43,571</u>
			<u>64,738</u>	<u>43,571</u>

# Networks.

**O**ur objective is to build a community network of local people interacting, sharing and learning from one another on a regular basis – offline and online. That means that as well as mobilising volunteers through social, digital and employment networks, it's also important to us that we tell the story of the contribution that older people and young professionals make to their community – together, every day. These networks help us to improve, and to listen to and learn from participants as we grow.

**EMAIL** 840 SIGN-UPS

**TWITTER** 1,500 FOLLOWERS

**FACEBOOK** 370 FOLLOWERS

**VIDEO** 12,000 VIEWS

**FLICKR** 81,500 VIEWS



**“He’s absolutely lovely. He’s such, such a good friend to me. Thank you for sending him to me.” Mitzi, 68**

# Governance.

In 2013/2014 North London Cares made big strides forward in our professionalisation and in improving our operations and governance. Supported in particular by Pilotlight, Nesta, UnLtd and our amazing volunteers we have implemented a new comprehensive risk assessment framework, as well as new financial management tools, improved volunteer management tools and integrated communications systems.

## Trustees

Our board of trustees comprises experienced, passionate professionals with the right combination of skills to support North London Cares to succeed. The board meets at least every three months to discuss progress and plan strategy. They are:

**Josie Cluer** (Chair) is the Government and Public Services Lead at Moorhouse, the transformation consultancy. She has over 12 years' experience in public policy and transformation, specialising in community cohesion and public service reform. She is also a trustee of Alcohol Concern. Josie was formerly a Special Adviser to the last Labour government.

**Nick Wigmore** has 10 years' experience in youth work and social enterprise – and is now working as a football coach in London. He was formerly a programme officer at Future First and co-founded goalkeeping school Safe Hands. Nick has been involved in North London Cares since its founding in 2011.

**David Easton** is an Investment Manager at CDC Group, a leading social investor responsible for transactions in Africa and South East Asia. Previously, David held a similar role at Bridges Ventures, was Director of Strategy and Investment for the Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative, and was a strategy consultant at McKinsey & Company. David is also on the Steering Committee for the Greenwich Free School and is a mentor on the OnPurpose Social Enterprise Leadership scheme.

**David Hayman** is responsible for Educate Girls' expansion plan over three new Indian regions. He was formerly Senior Head of Operations at The Prince's Trust and, before that, a consultant at Accenture. David helped set up educational charity Future First in 2008 and 2009 and he is a trustee at Tackle Africa.

In early 2015 **Ben Wilson** will join North London Cares' board of trustees. Ben brings 10 years' financial management experience to the table working in three different investment banks, and we're excited about how his expertise will support North London Cares to grow.

**Registered Office** C/O The Collective, 37 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7JE.

**Company Number** 07737818

**Charity Number** 1153137

**Accountants** Sue Owen Accountants, 14A Regent Road, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 1RP.

**Banking** The Cooperative Bank, PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP.

# Partners.

**A**s a small charity working at the intersection of the public, private and voluntary sectors, we rely on the generosity and collaboration of our many partners across our communities. These friends help us to meet our mission – to identify isolation, to deliver our Social Clubs, and to recruit and mobilise volunteers. Thank you.



**“It’s wonderful that your opportunities are flexible to my time needs. I can’t wait to get involved.”Lizzie, 23**



[www.northlondoncares.org.uk](http://www.northlondoncares.org.uk)



NORTH  
LONDON  
**CARES**