



*“Supporting the community for over 50
years”*

IMPACT REPORT

2023

Building a local community where
everyone lives a healthy & fulfilling life

Table of Contents

1. Introduction & Director's Note
2. Mission
3. Activity
4. Impact
5. People
6. Finances
7. Vision
8. Thank you
9. Chairperson's message

Introduction & Director's Note



CENTRE DIRECTOR - Paul Rogers

I am delighted to introduce our first Impact Report, and it feels like 2023 has been a real turning point for Island House. Although there is no doubt that local communities are taking longer than anyone expected to recover from the devastating effects of Covid-19, repeated lockdowns, and the more recent cost of living crisis, we are a small staff team, and are perfectly suited to adapt to changing circumstances and continue our mission to build a community where everyone lives a healthy and fulfilling life.

Our year began well as I worked with a management consultant from The Cranfield Trust, out of which came a new business strategy, energetic and skilled new trustees and an inspiring Away Day on the 35th floor of 1 Canada Square. Since then our trustees and staff have worked closely together on a number of projects, including marketing and fundraising strategies, reviewing our project provision and hall hire, and gaining ISO 9001 accreditation. Attendance on our projects has grown throughout the year, we have developed new partnerships with other key organisations, and our user groups have increased in number. Fundraising has continued to be increasingly successful, and being awarded two multi-year grants from Tower Hamlets has provided increased sustainability and important connections to the local authority. As a staff team we are feeling more energised and enthusiastic as we are finally in a position to think less of maintenance and more about expanding our vital services.

I am proud to lead our team of passionate and committed staff as we continue to make a difference in the lives of local people. If you've travelled with us on this journey, then I thank you for your company and support. We couldn't do what we do without you, and I hope this report is as inspiring to read as it has been to produce. If you've not worked with us yet, there is always a warm welcome to our group of wonderful stakeholders.

Mission



Our Mission:

To support the wellbeing of our local people, especially the disadvantaged and marginalised, to live healthy and fulfilling lives within a vibrant and thriving local community.

For over 50 years Island House has been a trusted local community hub based on the Isle of Dogs in Tower Hamlets providing facilities and services for our partner tenants (Island Advice Centre, Island House Playgroup and Quaystone Church), local residents and other user groups.

Tower Hamlets is the tenth most deprived local authority in England and has the highest levels of pensioner poverty and child poverty in England. An estimated 40% of households are living below the poverty line, and the employment rate of residents is below the national average (Tower Hamlets Plan 2019-2023).

We aim to address the emotional, physical, social, and spiritual needs of those of all faiths and none, seeking to identify gaps in service provision and make partnerships to extend our impact and build a strong, healthy community with its members living fulfilling lives. Roughly 300 people used the centre every week before the pandemic and numbers are increasing again as we seek to address loneliness and disadvantage, effectively improving the lives and prospects of our beneficiaries. Our work is especially valuable during the current cost-of-living crisis, which is the top priority in Tower Hamlets' current Strategic Plan.

"You are very important for me because you believed in me and supported me. Now I feel better than last year and I am hopeful about my future." - Hansa
SKILLS PROJECT PARTICIPANT

Activity

We deliver our services according to our three community-focused themes:

Community Training – our SKILLS project delivers an integrated selection of language, pre-employment, and computer training to disadvantaged people, often non-English speaking BME women, improving their prospects of employment or quality of living, as well as providing support and training for daily tasks that are now online, such as travel cards, pension credits, council tax reductions and energy rebates. This is especially needed during the current cost-of-living crisis.

Community Health – offering a growing selection of activities designed to improve mental and physical wellbeing, including our projects REFRESH (offering a range of mindfulness and exercise classes to improve mental and physical health), SENIORS (providing a selection of classes and activities to address loneliness and improve health of older people), and BILLY'S PANTRY (offering emergency food bags).

Community Hub – providing a base for our partner tenants (Island Advice Centre and Quaystone church), regular community activities (e.g., gymnastics and yoga classes), and other individuals and community groups, as well as a home for our portfolio of community projects.

12
sessions
run by Island House
per week



10
User-group
led sessions
per week

Impact

EMERGENCY
FOOD PARCELS
DISTRIBUTED
TO DATE:
327

**155
FREE**

EXERCISE CLASSES
PROVIDED TO
1,265 ATTENDEES
(55% INCREASE ON 2022)

28%
INCREASE IN
ATTENDEES
FOR OUR
SENIORS
PROJECTS

147 HOURS
IT TRAINING SESSIONS
PROVIDED TO SENIOR
CITIZENS IN 2023



83%
OF VOLUNTEERS PLACED
AT ISLAND HOUSE HAVE
FOUND FULL-TIME
EMPLOYMENT OR
ENROLLED ON A WORK
TRAINING PROGRAMME

PARENTS &
180 CHILDREN
ATTENDED
OUR FAMILY
EVENTS IN 2023

People

Shahida (ESOL Tutor) - “[The] purpose of this course is to integrate people who migrated here so they get familiar with the language to improve their quality of life”

Macaria (Service user) - “[The sessions] changed my life, to be more active. I achieved more mobility and I’m healthier”

Julia (ESOL student) - “This is an opportunity to improve my language, to meet new people, and to know about new cultures”

Chris (service user) - The staff here are very friendly, very helpful. We look out for each other”

Amanda (staff) - “[Our sessions] are a good stepping stone for people to build their confidence and find something they’re passionate about”

Carol (Service user) -

“If you just moved here, I would say come to Island House. They know a lot [about] what’s going on on the Island and they’re always helpful”.

Hien (Debt advisor) - “We work together and help clients sort out all their problems”

Janet (Service user) - “It’s a nice place to get together and to meet new people. Cathy gives me a lot of confidence”

Jo (Island Advice trainer/facilitator) - “The staff are lovely, our clients are lovely. There is something for everyone here, really!”

Joan (Trustee & long-time service user) - “I have used the services at Island House for many years... Now I am on the board of Trustees”



Finances

16%

**INCREASE IN
INCOME
COMPARED
TO 2022**

*£152k (2022) vs
£176k (2023)

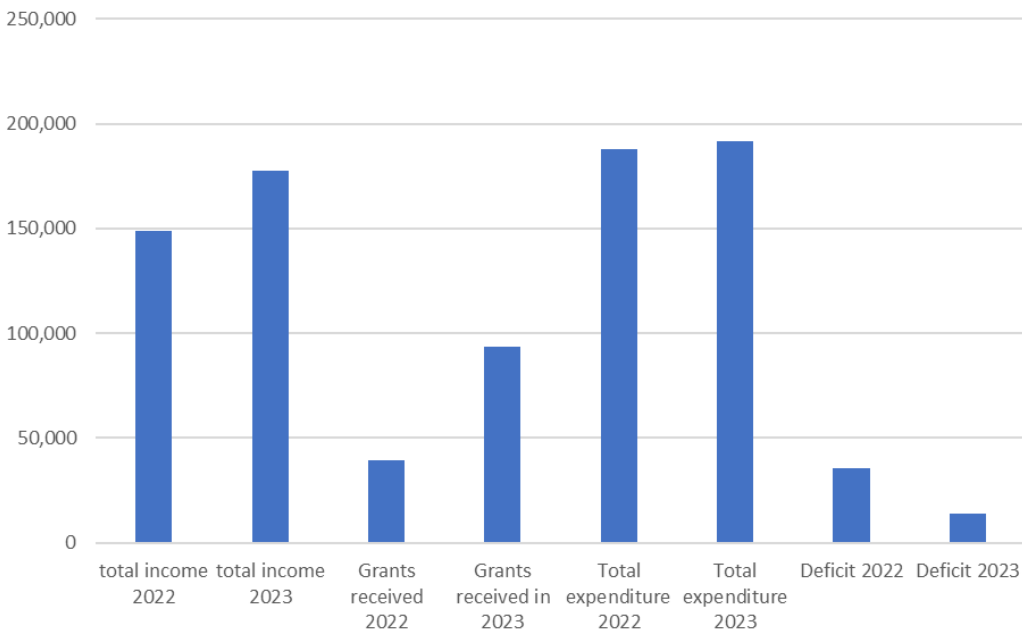
**ADDITIONAL
£50,000**

**LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING
SECURED ANNUALLY FOR THE
NEXT 3.5 YEARS (LBTH)**

60%

**INCREASE IN
GRANTS
RECIEVED
COMPARED
TO 2022**

Finance 2022-2023 Comparison



Vision

Vision 2023 - Achievements

- Produced our first impact report
- Obtained ISO 9001 Quality certification
- Evaluated current practice and developed a diverse fundraising strategy
- Begun to develop an effective marketing strategy
- Sought to increase the occupancy of our buildings
- Begun to design and obtain funding for a new youth project.

Vision 2024

- Launch New Youth Project
- Execute on Marketing Strategy to increase awareness and participation within the local community
- Roll out Digital Day training to improve the IT skills of the local community
- Securing a sustainable financial position

Building a local community where everyone lives a healthy & fulfilling life

Thank you

We are extremely grateful to all of the organisations below for funding and supporting our projects, and we thank them on behalf of all of our staff, volunteers, and project participants, for helping us to improve our community!



Message from our Chairperson



Island House welcomes this clear endorsement of our belief that we successfully combine a business head and a charitable heart.

Our overall purpose is to improve the life chances and employability of local people facing social and economic challenges. Reading through this Annual Impact Report you will have encountered numerous examples of how we have delivered for hundreds of local people in Tower Hamlets. I hope that this report has demonstrated to you that Island House is committed to its purpose and to providing positive outcomes. Our approach to our employees, volunteers, and partners is to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people whom we support, and we look forward to continuing our work into 2024!

- Kristin Papasolomontos

Chairperson of Island House Management Team



www.island-house.org

