

Social Impact Report

2021



LhaLondon

the heart of London Living

LHA London Ltd, 54 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PG.

Registered Charity No.1069428. Reg. No. 363816 England

Introduction

from our CEO

As a charity working with a diverse range of stakeholders and organisations, LHA can be a powerful driver of social benefit by providing young people with affordable, safe and well located accommodation in London.

As we approached our 82nd year, our Board of Trustees desired to assess and record just how much practical difference we have made for those we serve.

Producing this report has required us to think carefully about our vision and purpose, and not only how we already help our residents and stakeholders, but also appreciate our potential to do even more in the years to come.

We actively listened to a range of stakeholder to compile our report. This is our first Social Impact Report and we should be pleased to receive feedback from readers (annualreport@lhalondon.com) to help us improve our future impact measurement.





Who we are

LHA is a charity providing affordable accommodation to young working people and students living in Central London. LHA operates **14 London hostels** providing nearly **2000 bed spaces**. LHA provides accommodation in the boroughs of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Camden, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Hounslow and Islington. A structure of **70 paid staff** and over **150 volunteers** provide support services. LHA offers accommodation services, which provide a stepping stone to enable young people to advance their careers and education, whilst meeting residents' reasonable needs and enhancing their well-being.

LHA also supports partner organisations with the **objective of reducing homelessness amongst young people** in London. During the last financial year, LHA made grants to these partners totalling more than **£300,000**.

Our vision

To be a leading provider in the charity sector of secure, low-cost accommodation in London.



Our mission

In order to achieve our vision, we will expand our offering by acquiring, developing, maintaining and managing secure, low-cost hostel accommodation.

The accommodation will provide a diverse choice of living arrangements that meet the reasonable expectations of young people with limited means that wish to work or study in London.

Our Social Impact

We designed a Theory of Change (below) to articulate the social change we seek to achieve at LHA. We focus our organisational activities on three main areas - providing accommodation, developing volunteers and supporting partners. The ultimate impact of our work is to enable sustainable livelihoods, and sustaining mixed, diverse communities in London. By measuring outputs and outcomes, we seek to evidence the causal link between our activities and the impact we are trying to achieve.

Activities → Outputs → Outcomes → Impact



How we measure our social impact

For this first social impact report we have partnered with social impact specialist consultants Aleron (aleronpartners.com), to define and measure our impacts across residents, volunteers and partners. The following analyses were conducted:



Surveys conducted with residents, volunteers and LHA alumni.



Quantitative and qualitative analysis of resident and volunteer perceptions and activities.



Case studies of LHA's Fund partners to explore more indirect outcomes.

The context in which we work

London is dependent on its young people. Since the turn of the century, there has been a net inflow of young residents from the rest of England, that move to London to study or work early in their careers¹. With its international appeal, London also draws hundreds of thousands of young people from across the globe for studies and employment^{2,3}, bringing huge economic, intellectual and social capital to the city.

The value of international students²:

- **£2.3 billion annual net benefit**
- **70,000 jobs supported**

Since the early 2000s, London's population has grown by more than 20%⁴, in line with a rapid increase in the number of jobs⁵. In the same period, the London housing stock saw an increase of only 15%, failing to accommodate the extra demand⁵. Rather than stemming population growth, this shortfall has resulted in a rapid rise in house prices and rents, with average rents increasing by 38% in the past ten years (12% above inflation)⁶. As an indicator of how high London rents are, the rent of a one-bed flat was the equivalent of 46% of gross pay, almost twice as high as the UK average (24%)⁷. High housing costs are a widespread pressure for Londoners, with and increasingly prevalent overcrowding and homelessness. When housing costs are taken into account, a quarter of Londoners live in poverty.

In 2018, the Mayor of London announced that there was a housing crisis in the city and brought forward their London Housing Strategy, seeking to make the capital 'A City for all Londoners'⁸. The strategy prioritised:

1. building homes for Londoners;
2. delivering genuinely affordable homes;
3. high quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods;
4. a fairer deal for private renters and leaseholders; and
5. tackling homelessness and helping rough sleepers.

With the implementation of the strategy still in its early stages, it is unclear whether the government is doing enough to tackle the housing crisis⁸. While indicators for affordable housing have shown progress, homelessness rates and overcrowding have increased since 2017¹.

Following Brexit, a new immigration system put an end to free movement for EU citizens, which together with the COVID-19 pandemic, has significantly reduced migration from the EU.⁹ The pandemic has disproportionately impacted sectors in which EU migrants are strongly represented, such as hospitality and transport. EU migrants will play an important part in the economic recovery of these sectors, and provision of affordable and flexible accommodation will be key to drawing professionals to the capital.

A 2021 survey of young people found that housing, employment, and mental health are the most important issues for young Londoners, with Covid-19 and lockdown having an exacerbating effect on these issues.¹⁰

Providing affordable accommodation for young people in London has never been more relevant. The hostels that LHA provide ensure that young people from across the UK and beyond, continue to have access to affordable accommodation in central London, enabling them to pursue their passions and careers.

A review of the last year

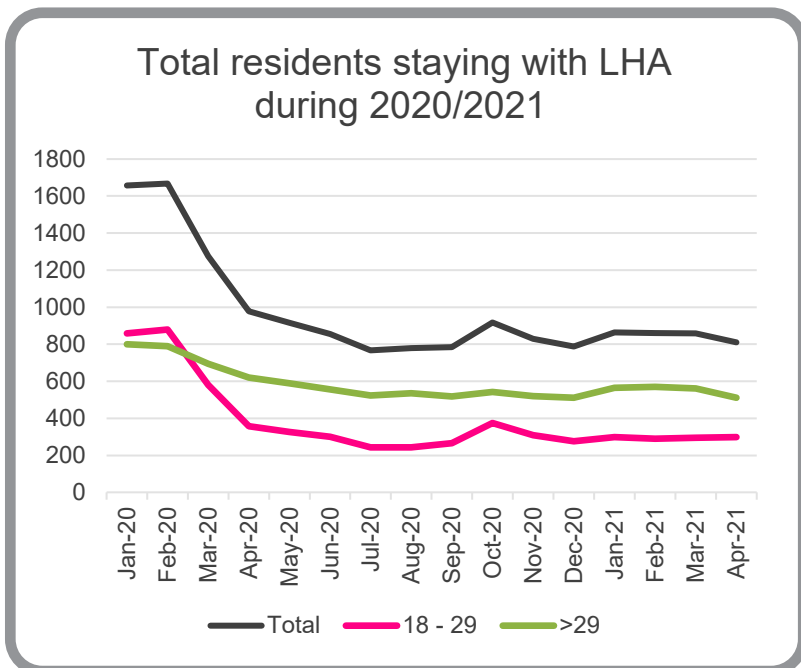
The last year has been unique in many ways. At the start of the pandemic we saw a significant drop in residents, in particular young residents, who often chose to return to their family home for lockdown. Our residents were impacted tremendously by the pandemic, with many being furloughed, studies moving online and the overall experience of being in London drastically changing.

In response to the pandemic, LHA implemented its COVID-19 safe and secure protocol. This meant responding to positive test results with self-isolation in affected areas of a building, providing support to vulnerable residents and introducing fee deferrals and discounts.

Homelessness has been a major concern during the pandemic too, with reduced access to shelters, support and funds, as well as increased unemployment, frequent challenges with residency permits and visas, and high vulnerability amongst rough sleepers. Early on in the pandemic, the government implemented the 'everyone in' campaign to provide homeless people with temporary accommodation. The number of homeless people however was far higher than expected and local councils struggled to meet the

demand for accommodation.

As LHA residents left London during the pandemic, LHA had the unique opportunity to partner with multiple homelessness charities to provide single and en-suite rooms in LHA hostels to homeless people (see 'In conversation with Glass Door' section too). LHA provided the building, facilities, maintenance, and in some cases also staff and volunteers. Homeless charities ran all other services, including outreach, casework and support. Approximately 100,000 nights of accommodation will have been provided in 2020/21.



Providing accommodation to organisations tackling homelessness

| Hostel | Beds provided | Sept - 20 | Oct - 20 | Nov - 20 | Dec - 20 | Jan - 21 | Feb - 21 | Mar - 21 | Apr - 21 | May - 21 | Jun - 21 | Jul - 21 | Aug - 21 | Sept - 21 |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Holland House | 101 beds | | | | | | | | | Glass Door | | | | The Passage |
| New Mansion House | 98 beds | | | | | | | | | Glass Door | | | | |
| Hounslow Central | 40 beds | | | | | | | | | | | | | Multiple* |

*Accommodation at Hounslow Central provided to GLA, DePaul, New Horizon and London Councils



14 Total hostels



1922 Total beds



803 Avg. residents*



165 Total volunteers

Our hostels

We have made several important moves during 2020 to support our charitable ambition to acquire new sites and to increase the number, affordability and range of facilities on offer to our residents. In the final months of 2019, LHA purchased a new site in Hounslow and during 2020, developed and submitted a design for planning permission.

We commenced a comprehensive and wide-ranging review of our sustainability ambitions, principles and strategy during the last year, with the following key areas of ambition:

- Enhancing the performance of our properties
- Empowering our people teams and neighbourhoods
- Maximising potential by building resilience
- Increasing impact through collaboration

Beyond the 3 hostels shared with other charities during 2020/21, we provided residents with 11 other hostels across London



Belvedere House
Gloucester Rd

156 65



Bowden Court
Notting Hill

313 127



Friendship House
Southwark

187 122



Halpin House
South Kensington

143 63



Leinster House
Bayswater

100 42



Newington Court
Islington

94 57



Sandeman-Allen
Bayswater

145 59



Torquay House
Royal Oak

164 110



Davies Court
East India Court

155 72



Belsize House
Belsize Park

138 50



Railton House
Islington

88 37

Our residents

LHA has an Open Access policy and attracts people from diverse backgrounds and locations, who require affordable accommodation in central London.

I moved to London because “I loved the idea of living in a welcoming international environment, and experience all the amazing opportunities London offers to develop myself professionally.”

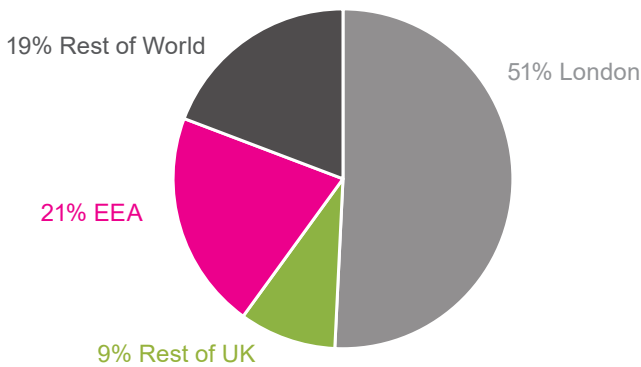
From the 122 survey responses of current residents, **40 nationalities** were recorded!

Employment: The majority of residents have come to London for employment, with **63%** of surveyed residents indicating that they are in full-time, part-time or self-employment.

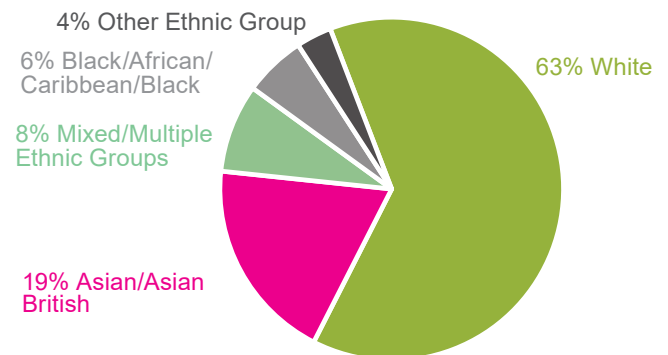
Education: The number of full-time or part-time students has dropped from **31%** amongst LHA alumni to **22%** amongst current residents, which is likely due to many students moving back home to study remotely during the pandemic.

Exploring resident diversity and background

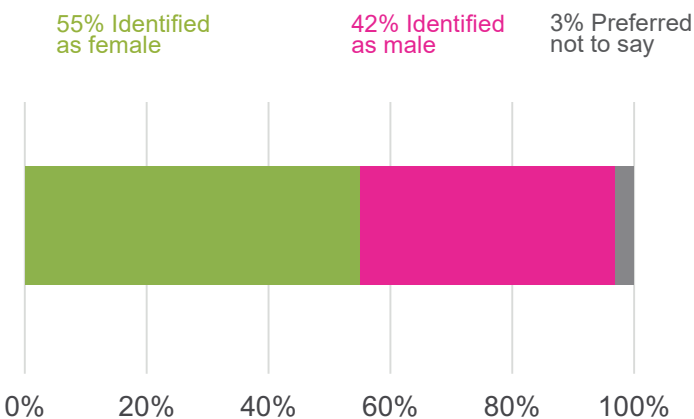
Residence prior to LHA



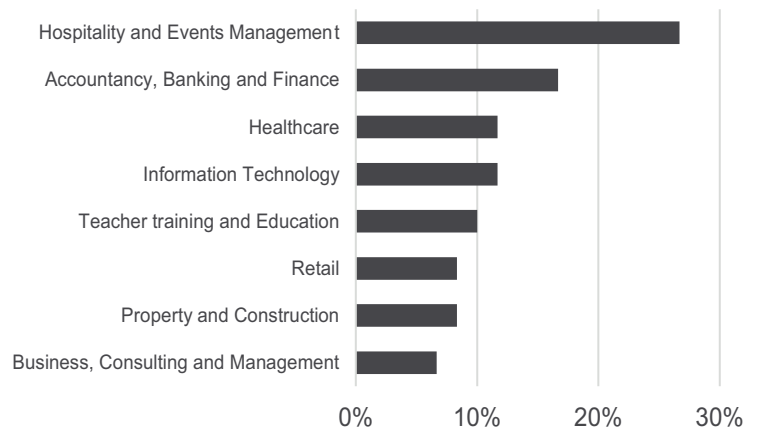
Resident's Ethnicity



Resident's Gender



Resident's Employment Industry





Our volunteers

Volunteering at LHA London is an important part of our continued success and the organisation's charitable aims of 'giving back'. Not only does a volunteer's valued contribution allow us to keep our accommodation affordable, it enables us to work

with a range of other smaller charities who specialise in supporting young people experiencing homelessness.

"It helped me to stay closer to all my interests and develop my jobs skills for better chances in the future."

LHA volunteers gain experience and develop new skills, whilst giving back to help the charitable aims of LHA.

We surveyed current and alumni

volunteers to further understand how they benefited from their time with LHA. 28 individuals answered our survey. While it should be noted that the results are not representative of all volunteers, they provide a strong indication as to the impact achieved.

"I met incredible people among the staff and they became my friends. Some of them are family to me now."

"I got my first job, I had a taste of what independence feels like and for better or for worse it made me realise what kind of person I am and how to learn to solve my own problems without much help."

74% Feel that the volunteering experience has been valuable for their professional development (e.g. for future job opportunities).

% of current and alumni volunteers that felt they had improved in the following skills as a result of the volunteer programme:

| | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| English language | 70% | Attention to detail | 74% |
| Teamwork | 78% | Communication skills | 83% |
| Time management | 87% | Knowledge of hospitality | 87% |

73% of residents feel accepted for who they are in London.

60% of residents feel that they would like to live in London in the future.

85% of residents feel that the experiences they have had in London (outside of LHA) have been valuable to them.

Outcomes

New experiences

“I have been able to enjoy the fast paced London life, going to the theatre, meeting friends and enjoying the sights. It has also allowed me to visit the office of my workplace and meet colleagues.”

“Staying at LHA in 2016 was my first time living alone in London which I was very proud of. I’ve worked at pubs and as a Royal Opera House server during my stays. I now feel more confident about building a future as a solicitor in London.”

“I have been able to discover myself by virtue of being able to live in full pursuit of my career and hobbies from a location that was extremely easy to travel to and from. It allowed me to express myself and it let me come into my own more fully.”

Photo credit: Glass Door

By providing affordable accommodation in central London, we hope to enable residents to experience the city to its fullest and thrive in the unique, diverse and exciting environment that central London offers.

For young people, LHA may be the first ‘home away from home’, providing a sheltered environment with access to support. Our surveys evidenced this as:

75% of young residents (under 29 y/o) agreed that their stay with LHA helped them to gain independence.

Outcomes

Fostering relationships



54% of residents feel that they can go to people at LHA for support.

54% of residents indicate that they have made friends with other LHA residents.

52% of residents feel that there is a strong sense of community.

47% of alumni residents have stayed in touch with other LHA residents.

With its common areas and shared accommodation and facilities, many residents choose LHA for more than its affordability and location, but for sociable living. **21% of residents cited 'sociable living' as one of their main reasons for staying with LHA.**

The majority of residents indicated that they had made friends with other residents and/or staff, however were less positive about a wider social network or community at LHA.

We believe that the combination of affordable accommodation, high-quality facilities, good locations, and sociable living helps to improve residents' overall well-being. Using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, we measured whether residents' wellbeing had improved since moving in with LHA. Overall, **41% of residents indicated that their well-being had improved**, and 94% indicated that their well-being had not gotten worse.

LHA seeks to make London accessible to young people, by providing affordable accommodation, facilities and support to its residents. We compared LHA rental costs to median London rental costs of 2-bed properties in central London. We found that median London rents in central London ranged between £1100 and £1600 per person per month⁷. This can be compared to a LHA hostel twin room which ranges in price between £475 and £700 a month - less than half of central London median rent.

Surveys found that for **36% of residents**, staying with LHA was their first time living in

Impacts

Making London accessible to young people

London - for many an introduction and stepping stone into the city.

While affordability, flexibility of terms and low deposit are all frequently cited reasons for staying with LHA, it is the **location of housing that is the most important factor for choosing LHA.**

“I could not find similar accommodation to LHA, especially that central. I was very happy when I discovered LHA! I would probably not have been able to afford to stay in central London, and it would have been more difficult to adjust, especially being from a different country.”

“The experience I had while staying in LHA was one of the most important ones in my life and if it wasn't for the affordable prices, I would have probably missed it.”

16% of residents think that they were at a moderate or large risk of being homeless if they had not been able to stay with LHA.

57% of residents think that they would not have been able to afford to stay in central London if they had not stayed with LHA.



Ultimately, we hope that by providing a first foothold in London, with the ability to pursue a career or studies, we help to enable sustainable livelihoods in the long term. This may include a more stable financial or housing situation, improved career opportunities or improved well-being.

We asked residents about their housing situation prior to staying with LHA. We found that 8% of residents were living in temporary accommodation, emergency accommodation

or homeless prior to LHA. While this is a small percentage, we consider this an important achievement - for these individuals, we hope that LHA has been a helpful stepping stone towards a more sustainable livelihood.

We asked alumni residents to think about how their life may have been different if they hadn't stayed with LHA. Comments ranged from no difference all the way to LHA having a tremendous impact on their lives. For some, staying at LHA meant being able to pursue their studies or employment or get to know London and meet people. For others it was a chance to save money towards a first deposit or to lead a more fulfilling life with less pressures.

**If I had not stayed at LHA
“I would have never gone
to college and for that I
am endlessly thankful.”**

Impacts

Enabling sustainable livelihoods



“I believe the experience of living in such a diverse community has make me more open minded and given me some sort of maturity. especially being from a different country.”

If I had not stayed with LHA “I would not necessarily be able to be living alone like I am now. I may have had to share a flat with people I didn't know in a less convenient part of London. Living with LHA allowed me time to find the ideal living situation when I was ready to move.”

66% of resident alumni agree that LHA has helped them to achieve their goals.

47% of residents feel more optimistic about their future prospects as a result of staying with LHA.

53% of residents feel more confident about their financial situation now than before they stayed with LHA.

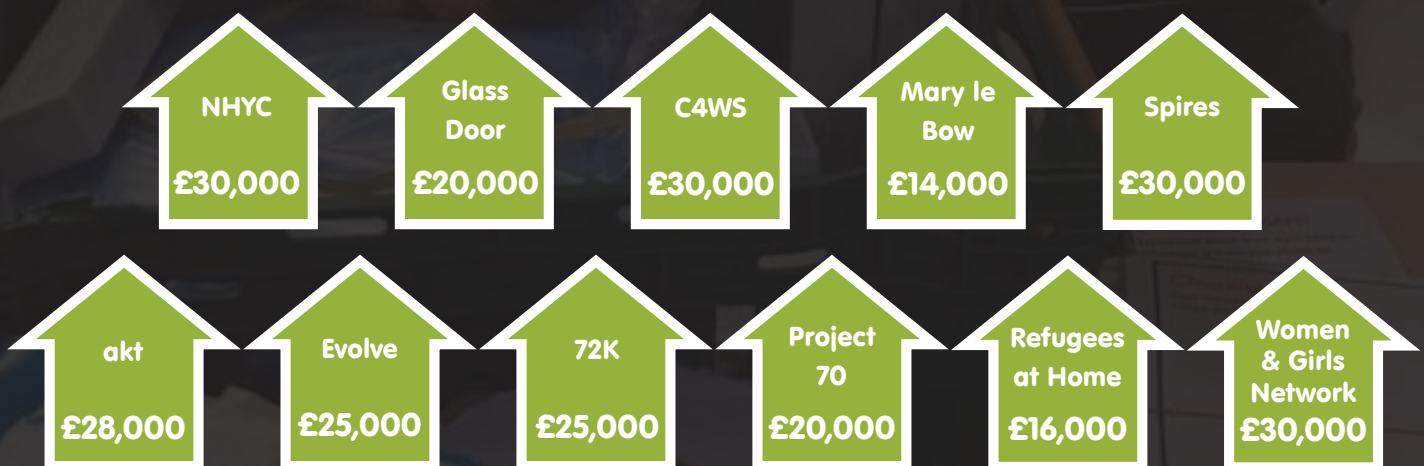
Our partnerships

We are committed to supporting London charities with similar objectives. During the year we made **grants totalling £370,500**. This year, we funded **16 projects**, an increase from the 13 projects in 2019/20.

LHA also **granted £116,000 of emergency funds** to tackle Covid-19's impact on the charities we support. Since its implementation, the LHA fund has grown and continues to strengthen over the years.

Each fund is monitored through conversations with project leads and grant beneficiaries, where appropriate. Additionally, projects capture case studies and track outputs and outcomes. Key considerations include: grant use; outcomes and impacts; circumstances affecting grant use; any future changes ahead.

Established projects



New 2020/2021 projects





In conversation with:

Spires

Partnership case study

Photo credit: Getty Images



The Spires Centre is a charitable organisation supporting homeless people, seeking to enable opportunities for sustainable living.

Spires' day centres provide hot food, shower and toilet facilities, and create a space for its caseworkers to engage with rough sleepers. Through

Spires Streetlink, the organisation reaches out to female and transgender sex workers, supporting them in their journey to exit street-based sex work. Spires also provides a range of courses and workshops to help individuals with topics such as budgeting, managing tenancies, health and wellbeing and English language support.

For the past three years, the LHA has been providing funds for Spires to employ a caseworker to work specifically with young people. The caseworker has lived experience with homelessness and substance abuse, which helps them build trusted connections with rough sleepers. As such, the caseworker is involved in connecting with people that come to the day centre, conducting assessments, running workshops, attaining benefits, and encouraging going into treatment. Recently, residency has been a major issue, and caseworkers have been helping rough sleepers to seek permits.

Over the past year, day centres have had to run a significantly reduced service and have focussed on helping homeless people in crisis. Whilst the 'everyone in' campaign had a notable but temporary positive impact on homelessness in London during the pandemic, some people - often suffering from substance abuse or severe mental health issues - were unable to access accommodation. Spires reaches out to and connects these people with their

“The consistent funding from LHA that we have been receiving for the past three years has been key to building relationships with homeless people and has helped build a psychologically informed environment” – Nigel Carpenter, Spires CEO

Key Spires Metrics

- 9 Privately rented housing found
- 41 Rough sleepers helped off the streets
- 25 People supported with health issues
- 6 People received mental health support and referral
- 17 People received drugs and alcohol support and referral
- 5 People supported with Local Authority housing applications
- 6 People supported with applications for education programmes
- 17 People supported with sustainment of their tenancy
- 43 EU nationals supported to get or in the process of getting settled status
- 33 Benefits claims dealt with from young people

GLASSDOOR

Based in London, Glass Door provides shelter and support to people affected by homelessness. Glass Door maintains an open access policy and coordinates the largest network of open access services in the UK.

LHA has been partnering with Glass Door for more than 5 years, providing funds towards casework services to support young people under 35. Caseworkers help rough sleepers with accessing their benefits, applying for accommodation and referrals, as well as supporting them with their mental health.

During the pandemic, Glass Door was forced to close its shared spaces due to government restrictions and the high vulnerability amongst rough sleepers. With many residents leaving LHA accommodation at the start of the pandemic, a unique opportunity arose for LHA to partner with Glass Door to provide individual rooms in LHA hostels to homeless people. At its peak, more than 100 people were staying at the 2 LHA hostels. LHA continued the day-to-day management of the hostels, whilst caseworkers from Glass Door were on site to help rough sleepers to move to more permanent accommodation.

In conversation with:

Glass Door

Partnership
case study

Photo credit: Glass Door

Key Glass Door Metrics

- 404 Guests aged 18 - 34 seen
- 67 People moved into more permanent housing
- 28 People achieved benefits claims
- 50 People granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme
- 62 People registered with a GP and/or received a COVID-19 vaccination
- 15 People assisted to apply for a lost ID
- 25 People who found employment
- 10 Bank accounts opened
- 11 People assisted to apply for a National Insurance number
- 2 People Reconnection to home country/ of origin
- 6 People who found training/education

“Since opening our hostels to Glass Door guests in November 2020, Glass Door has been able to support many individuals in need of emergency accommodation. With the support of LHA staff and volunteers, Glass Door have met an urgent need for those experiencing homelessness while similar services have remained closed. Over the Christmas period in 2020, with many other emergency accommodation sites closed, Glass Door hostels represented just over half of the emergency bed spaces in London.” – Tony Perkins, LHA CEO

References

- 1 *Housing in London 2020 report, GLA. (2020)*
- 2 *London Calling: International students' contribution to Britain's economic growth, London First; PWC. (2015)*
- 3 *Facing Facts: The impact of migrants on London, its workforce and its economy, London First; PWC. (2017)*
- 4 *London population, Macrotrends. (2021)*
- 5 *London Housing Strategy, Mayor of London. (2018)*
- 6 *London rental prices, Bricks&Logic (2020)*
- 7 *London's Poverty Profile, Trust for London.*
- 8 *London Mayor 21: What's really been happening with housing and planning under Sadiq Khan? onlondon.co.uk (April 2021)*
- 9 *Integration in the UK and the Post-Brexit immigration system, The Migration Observatory. (2021)*
- 10 *Mapping Young London, Partnership for Young London. (2021)*

Notes

We conducted anonymous voluntary surveys with residents and volunteers, to capture their profiles, personal experiences and perceived outcomes, both qualitatively and quantitatively. We also surveyed alumni residents and volunteers who left LHA since 2018, to investigate longer term outcomes and impacts. Response rates were as follow:

- Current volunteers: 18 responses
- Current residents: 122 responses
- Alumni volunteers: 10 responses
- Alumni residents: 195 responses

Total: 345 responses

When metrics in the report mention 'residents', the statistic refers to both current and alumni residents – similarly for volunteers. If the metric refers to one specific group, e.g. current residents, this is mentioned explicitly.

About Aleron

Aleron

Aleron supported LHA to analyse their their social impact and create this impact report.

Aleron is a sustainability and social impact consultancy founded in 2010, helping organisations across the globe to improve their impact on our society and planet.

Aleron is made up of a team of specialists in social impact, sustainability, performance improvement and data analytics. They have successfully delivered over 500 projects with more than 100 organisations, ranging from start-up impact ventures and corporates through to nonprofits and foundations.

Aleron offers a full suite of services: strategy, impact & performance, operations, growth & innovation, reporting & evaluation. We also support all clients with cross-cutting sustainability services.

For more information about Aleron, visit the website here: aleronpartners.com