



islington
giving

BIG ALLIANCE

CoRe PROGRAMME IMPACT REPORT 2024

expedia group™

MACQUARIE

SLAUGHTER AND MAY/





INTRODUCTION/ **ABOUT THE CoRe PROGRAMME**

THE CoRe PROGRAMME

Delivered by the BIG Alliance, the CoRe (Community Resourcing) programme is a long-standing social impact partnership between Macquarie Group, Slaughter and May, and Expedia Group. Now in its 16th year, CoRe connects skilled corporate volunteers with grassroots charities and community organisations in Islington and the surrounding areas, supporting them to address operational needs and tackle strategic challenges.

Over a six-month period, teams of volunteers contribute their professional expertise to deliver collaborative projects that enhance organisational capacity, strengthen capability, and promote long-term financial sustainability. In 2024, the programme supported 11 local organisations working across diverse areas — from refugee support and bereavement services to youth development and women's empowerment.

This year, 40 volunteers generously donated approximately 2,000 hours of their time to co-create practical, strategic solutions for their community partners. The following report outlines the impact of the 2024 programme and demonstrates how CoRe continues to build resilience and lasting social value across the borough.



CoRe 2024 IN NUMBERS¹

11

CHARITIES

40

VOLUNTEERS

2000

VOLUNTEERS HOURS

49

TOTAL STRATEGIES
CREATED OR
DEVELOPED

41

TOTAL PRODUCTS
CREATED OR
DEVELOPED¹

1. Products include, marketing materials, services, websites, platforms, systems etc



CoRe FRAMEWORK/

FACILITATING SOCIAL IMPACT

01

BIG ALLIANCE DIAGNOSTIC WITH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Analyses needs, readiness, capacity and expectations. Why? Critical to scoping the projects to be programme ready.

VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS MATCHED.

Why? Ensures the right skills are linked with the right needs.

02

03

FACILITATED LAUNCH AND DEEP DIVE WORKSHOP

Why? Creates achievable objectives, timelines and deliverables.

04

TWO-MONTH CHECKPOINT

Reviews the progress and helps to plan forward. Why? Connects organisations and volunteers, shares learning and troubleshooting.

05

FOUR-MONTH CHECKPOINT

Reviews the progress and helps to plan forward. Why? Connects organisations and volunteers, shares learning and troubleshooting.

06

PROGRAMME END AND CELEBRATION

Provides closure, reflection and encouragement to community organisations and volunteers for future capacity building. Why? A chance to feedback and celebrate partnership and collaboration.

07

PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Informs the continued development of the programme and its impact on the voluntary sector and business volunteers.

DEMONSTRATING SOCIAL IMPACT

BUILDING RESOURCES

CoRe 2024 MADE A TANGIBLE IMPACT ON THE CAPACITY OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

46%

Reported either hiring new staff/volunteers or being in the process of doing so. These included both formal hires and volunteer recruitment, demonstrating organisational growth.

IMPROVING PRODUCTS

PARTICIPANTS REPORTED MEANINGFUL ENHANCEMENTS ACROSS MULTIPLE ORGANISATIONAL OUTPUTS

73%

improved or created marketing materials.

64%

enhanced or developed policies and procedures.

55%

made improvements to their social media presence.

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

73%

of organisations reported improvements in their financial resilience. The strongest improvements were seen in preparation for future fundraising and enhanced tools for financial planning.

DEVELOPING SKILLS

THE PROGRAMME WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN CREATING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

55%

of organisations stated that they had definitely or potentially developed or improved skills development opportunities as a result of their participation.

PARTNERING FOR GROWTH

CoRe 2024 ENCOURAGED COLLABORATION WITH CORPORATIONS, GOVERNMENT BODIES, AND LOCAL NETWORKS

36%

of organisations formed new partnerships or deepened existing ones.





IMPACT/

IMPACT ON COMMUNITY PARTNERS



respondents reported that the programme improved their organisation's ability to **deliver services more effectively**



respondents reported that the programme improved their organisation's ability to continue delivering services in the long run



respondents would recommend the programme to another not-for-profit organisation

IMPACT/

COMMUNITY PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

“

I can honestly say I had a good team, willing and very able. They really helped us to upscale our abilities and inspiration, increased our confidence and our capability to deliver more professional services.”

SALLY MILLER

CEO, AGE UK

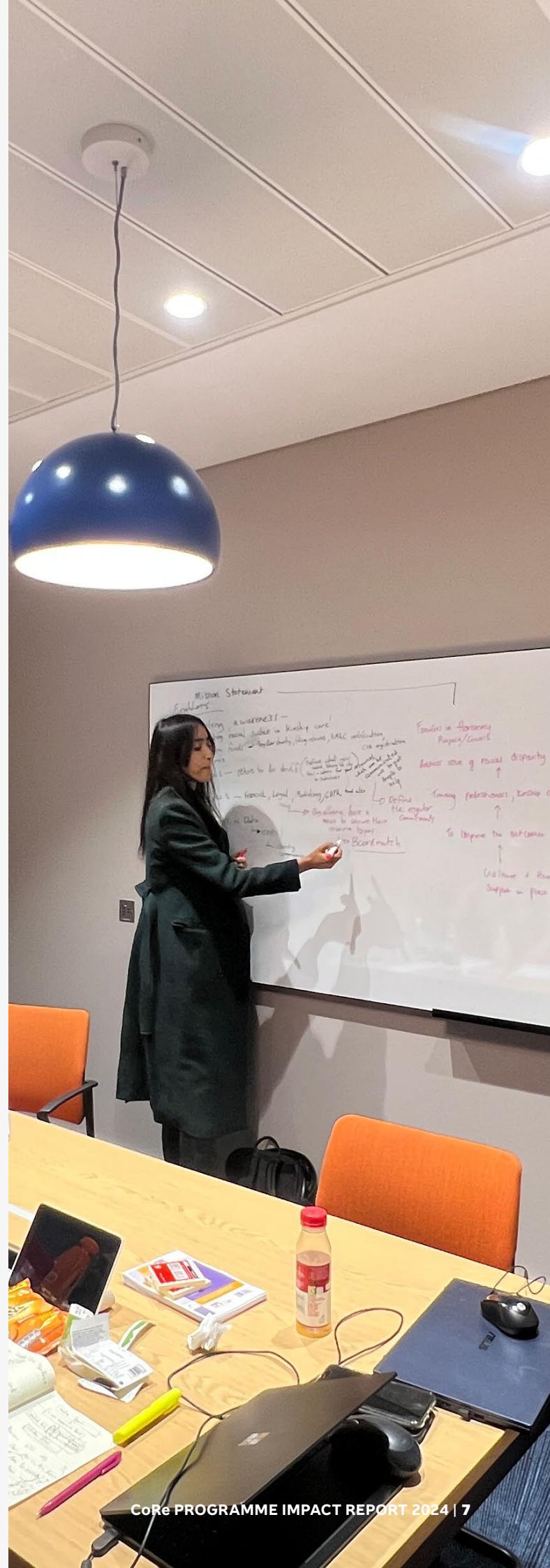
“

Sometimes it's hard to see what's right in front of you; having someone from a different background can give you new perspectives. We had a very productive group of volunteers. It always felt like we were having collaborative debates and discussions for a shared purpose.

We had a really good experience, we wouldn't have got to where we are now without the programme. CoRe holds you accountable to progress and gives you a morale boost.”

GUY LAWRENCE

DIRECTOR, AWESOME CIC



IMPACT/

IMPACT ON VOLUNTEERS

WELLBEING AND BEHAVIOUR

98%

of volunteers experienced positive changes in their personal wellbeing or behaviour.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

As a result of their involvement in the CoRe programme, volunteers reported that they developed skills in:

94%

COLLABORATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

91%

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

91%

STRATEGIC THINKING

91%

PROBLEM SOLVING

84%

**PRIORITISATION AND MANAGING
PROJECT SCOPE**

91%

DECISION MAKING

91%

NEGOTIATION AND INFLUENCING

NON-PROFIT SECTOR INSIGHT

As a result of their involvement in the CoRe programme, volunteers reported that they gained:

94%

Knowledge and understanding of the non-profit sector

98%

Knowledge of wider social issues in Islington and the surrounding areas



VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE

“

Volunteering has helped me develop a deeper understanding of social issues and how they affect people in real life. The experience has also made me more motivated to get involved in my community and create positive change. Overall, it's been a rewarding journey that has strengthened both my personal and professional growth.

EXPEDIA VOLUNTEER

“

Participating in the CoRe programme has deepened my understanding of the wide social issues affecting Islington and surrounding areas. I've learned about the prevalence of poverty, housing insecurity, youth issues and the impact of austerity measures on local communities. The programme highlighted the importance of addressing mental health challenges and supporting vulnerable populations, including the elderly and youth. This experience has equipped me with the knowledge to advocate for effective solutions and contribute to positive change in these communities.”

SLAUGHTER AND MAY VOLUNTEER

“

Participating in the CoRe programme has provided me with invaluable insights into the charity sector. I've learned that collaboration and community engagement are crucial for addressing societal needs effectively. Additionally, I've gained a deeper understanding of the challenges charities face, such as limited resources and the need for continuous innovation. This experience has also shown me the significant impact that dedicated volunteers and proactive involvement can have on driving positive change within the community.”

MACQUARIE VOLUNTEER

PROJECT SUMMARIES/

CoRe 2024 PROJECT SUMMARIES

AGE UK ISLINGTON



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Age UK Islington supports adults across Islington to improve their wellbeing and remain connected. With their current strategy coming to an end, the CoRe volunteer team supported the charity in laying the groundwork for its new 2025–2028 strategy. Volunteers engaged in sector and competitor research, analysed the local funding and contracting environment, and provided guidance on community needs and service user resilience. Their work also contributed to the early development of a refreshed fundraising approach.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<p>Research to inform the new organisational strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Community needs analysisCompetitor benchmarkingSWOT analysisInsights into the funding landscape
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The work provided a solid foundation for strategic planning, helping the team better understand their operating environment. While financial forecasting is ongoing, the team is confident the work will contribute to a robust and future-facing strategy.</p>

ALL CHANGE



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>All Change brings together artists and communities to co-create powerful and inclusive arts projects. As the organisation prepares to mark its 40th anniversary, CoRe volunteers supported early thinking for the next strategic chapter. The team worked with All Change on business model exploration, community engagement strategies, and planning around funding, staffing, and space use — helping the charity reflect on its mission, sustainability, and future impact.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Initial strategy reviewIdeas for future business modelsStructured feedback from external perspectives to help shape their new vision and business plan
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The support prompted valuable internal reflection on current and future strategies. The organisation appreciated the honest, constructive input and is taking forward ideas for future planning.</p>



ARACHNE GREEK CYPRIOT WOMEN'S GROUP

PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Arachne Women's Support empowers women across Islington and Greater London through advice, employability training, health workshops, and cultural activities. Building on an existing soft rebrand, the CoRe volunteer team helped the organisation strengthen its public presence and operational tools. Support focused on digital platforms, stakeholder mapping, staff resources, and communications — all aimed at embedding their evolving identity into day-to-day practices.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Website and branding redesignImproved social media strategyDraft marketing materialsOperational templates including staff handbook guidance
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The programme helped Arachne enhance its digital presence and streamline key documents. With a stronger promotional offer, the team expects greater reach and engagement with the communities they serve.</p>

AWESOME CIC

awesome!

PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Awesome CIC provides adventure play for children across Islington. Keen to diversify income streams, they worked with their CoRe volunteer team to explore ways of making better use of their premises, resources, and in-house expertise — including first aid and PAT training — to develop new revenue-generating services and enhance sustainability.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<p>Business ideas and delivery plans for services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Venue hire modelsDevelopment of new income-generating serviceTraining services (First Aid)PAT testing as a revenue streamEarly-stage plans for marketing and comms
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The project gave Awesome CIC a clear path to monetising existing resources without compromising their core values. Throughout the programme, the team have planned, organised and created a financial plan for a new soft play area alongside parent & child coffee mornings. The organisation is due to launch their new initiatives in June 2025, supporting their longer-term financial resilience.</p>



PROJECT SUMMARIES/

CoRe 2024 PROJECT SUMMARIES

GO AFRICA



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Go Africa uses arts, crafts, and storytelling to celebrate African heritage and promote cultural pride. With big ambitions for growth, they sought CoRe support to build the foundations of a more structured and sustainable organisation — including business planning, operations, and impact measurement.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Marketing and comms strategyWebsite and brand guidanceTools for stakeholder engagementDraft monitoring and evaluation frameworkOperational advice on internal systems
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The project helped Go Africa enhance its public-facing offer and internal systems, better positioning the organisation for funding and partnership opportunities. It also improved the founder's confidence in leading organisational development.</p>

HILLSIDE CLUBHOUSE



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Hillside Clubhouse supports people with mental health diagnoses through employment and inclusion programmes. Their CoRe project focused on developing tools to articulate and evidence the organisation's impact — particularly for funders and commissioners.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Draft impact report structureIdeas for cost-benefit analysisCompetitor and sector landscape reviewTemplates for storytelling and reporting
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The project helped Hillside build a clearer case for support and explore how to quantify the financial and social impact of their work. The outputs will strengthen future funding bids and promotional efforts.</p>

KURDISH AND MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (KMEWO)



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>KMEWO supports women from minoritised communities, many of whom are survivors of abuse and hardship. With recent internal changes, KMEWO worked with CoRe volunteers on developing a new business plan, diversifying funding, and improving operational systems to support a stronger future.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">5-year business plan structureDraft fundraising strategyHR and operational improvement recommendationsCRM use review
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The work gave KMEWO the tools to plan for sustainable growth and better manage internal processes, such as their HR and hiring practices. As a result of the programme, they have recruited and onboarded two new staff members, greatly increasing their internal resources. The programme has also supported their leadership through a major transition period.</p>

SAY IT LOUD CLUB



PROJECT FOCUS	<p>Say It Loud Club provides support to LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. Experiencing rapid growth, the organisation needed support streamlining systems and planning for sustainable funding. The CoRe volunteers helped SILC explore CRM integration, website improvement, and long-term planning.</p>
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">CRM implementation adviceDraft marketing and comms strategyBusiness plan structureWebsite UX recommendationsPolicy and impact measurement guidance
KEY OUTCOMES	<p>The support helped SILC formalise back-office systems and improve the clarity of their messaging. They feel more equipped to meet demand and explore new funding avenues.</p>



PROJECT FOCUS	SLOW provides peer-led support for bereaved families. With demand growing and a unique service model, they worked with CoRe volunteers to strengthen their marketing, operational efficiency, and fundraising — ensuring long-term sustainability.
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate partnership strategy Draft fundraising plan Updated comms messaging Internal process improvement guidance Volunteer engagement recommendations
KEY OUTCOMES	The work provided SLOW with practical tools and strategic clarity to build capacity and explore new income sources. It has also supported planning for future service expansion.

THE PARENT HOUSE



PROJECT FOCUS	The Parent House empowers isolated parents through support, training, and volunteering. Approaching their 25th anniversary, they partnered with CoRe volunteers to explore income diversification and plan a milestone celebration that would strengthen their community profile.
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income diversification plan Marketing and comms content for anniversary Recipe book concept and structure Website and social media recommendations Celebration event prep
KEY OUTCOMES	The support gave TPH tangible tools to fundraise, celebrate their legacy, and boost visibility. The celebration event raised £4,865 in unrestricted funding, helping the organisation's financial stability. The process also re-energised staff and volunteers in the lead-up to the anniversary year.

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE (WRC)



PROJECT FOCUS	WRC supports the UK women's sector through advocacy and capacity-building. Their CoRe project addressed both internal systems and external profile-raising, aiming to grow their network and better manage data and partnerships.
KEY OUTPUTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRM and data management improvements HR and accreditation process review Draft corporate partnership strategy Member engagement recommendations
KEY OUTCOMES	The volunteers' insights helped WRC streamline internal systems and enhance their external voice. They now feel better equipped to scale their work and diversify partnerships.

“

Having volunteers from a different sector brings fresh ideas and allows flexibility for a new way of working. It was great to see the immediate impact of the programme through recruiting new staff. The volunteers' energy was amazing. They were very helpful, respectful and knowledgeable. It was inspiring to see their passion for the CoRe project, on top of their day jobs.

It was a great programme, I'm really glad that we took part. It's been really helpful for the organisation.”

SAZAN SALIH

OPERATIONS/VAWG SERVICE MANAGER,
KURDISH AND MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN'S
ORGANISATION





To find out more about the CoRe Programme please contact:

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