

Case Study

A partnership of local expertise



Barnet is one of London's largest outer boroughs and relatively affluent but its challenges include significant and growing groups at particular risk of social isolation such as older people, disabled people, the unemployed and young families, combined with a lack of support and community infrastructure.

Barnet's small charities have been hard hit by cuts and changes in the funding and operating landscape. Both Inclusion Barnet, a peer-led disabled and deaf people's organisation, and CommUNITY Barnet, the community voluntary service, began to consider the development of a PBGS to address this by enabling communities to help themselves and engaging a wider section of local residents and businesses.

In summer 2014 the two organisations began working in partnership to establish Barnet



Giving. Inclusion Barnet carried out the initial 'legwork' and has become the lead/accountable body. A Steering Committee comprises an independent Chair and the CEOs and one trustee of each of the partners. An advisory panel of local people sets the grant making strategy and makes funding decisions as well as advising the Steering Committee on Barnet Giving's overall direction. The panel includes local voluntary sector professionals, community leaders and long-term volunteers.

In the first year the London Community Foundation administered the grants programme and matched any funds raised by 50% from an existing endowment.

Drawing on the combined knowledge and experience of these two well-established and embedded organisations and alongside community consultation events seeking the views of local charities and residents, the decision was made to focus Barnet Giving's grant making on social isolation, developing community links and promoting independence.

Barnet Giving's first open grants round of £30k closed in January 2017, making grants of between £1k and £5k. The long-term aim is to develop some strategic funding initiatives around borough priorities and to build a legacy fund.

The development of a partnership agreement began early in discussions between the two partners. It was modelled on other delivery partnership agreements but Barnet Giving Project Lead, Ruth Tosha Mulandi, said it proved to be more complex.

"Usually the agreement is quite straightforward; a lead organisation gets the money and is accountable. The relationship between the partners in Barnet Giving is much more equal and multi-faceted. Funding comes from multiple sources and we are accountable to each funder. Ownership of branding and copyright is complex as Barnet Giving is a distinct initiative rather than simply a service that is being co-delivered. And we had to consider succession planning; what happens if one of the parties decides to walk away or a new partner comes in? Both partners had legal help and it took a long time to reach agreement."

Ruth's advice to others treading the same path? *"All partners have to be absolutely on-board and collaborative. Draw on one others' areas of strength and be prepared to keep working on it."*


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Toby Blume, Chair of Barnet Giving, says: *"As a firm believer in the idea that local solutions to problems are more likely to be sustainable and effective, local giving schemes are an ideal way to bring about positive change in our communities. We have the potential to bring people together, to work towards common goals to make Barnet a better place for all of us."*

► www.barnetgiving.org.uk

Creating a successful multi-sector collaboration means having representatives from all of those sectors round the table from the beginning.

Collaboration is much more than just delivering a service together, be prepared to keep working on it.


1 in 4
of Barnet's children live in poverty



Unemployment is 3%
higher than the national average



Barnet has the highest number of adults with dementia in London