

2023 – 2024

L&Q Foundation Annual Report

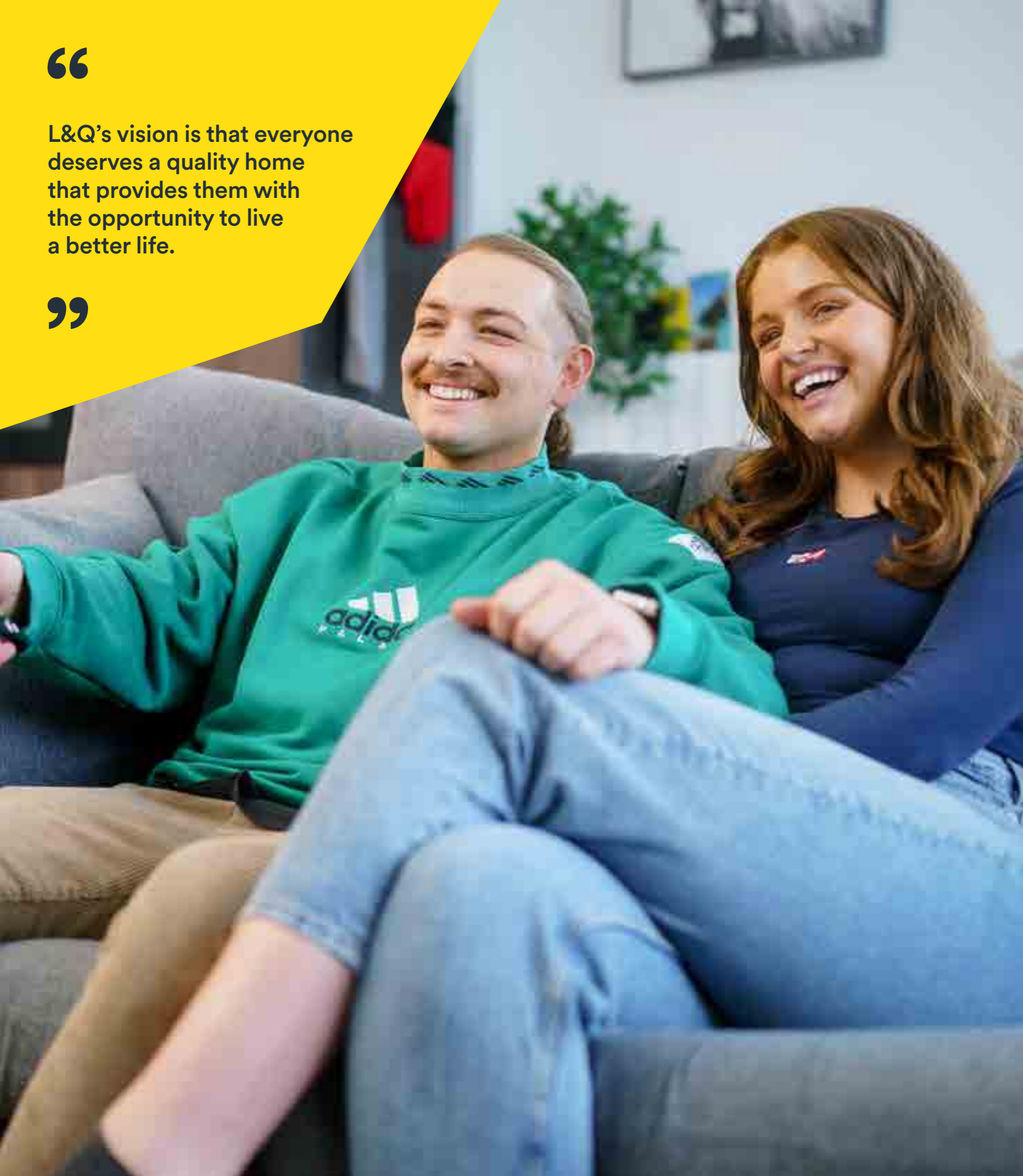


L&Q
FOUNDATION

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L&Q’s vision is that everyone deserves a quality home that provides them with the opportunity to live a better life.

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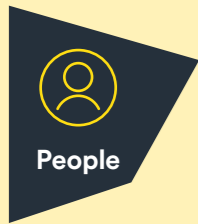
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Background

L&Q's vision is that everyone deserves a quality home that provides them with the opportunity to live a better life.

Set up in 2011, the Foundation brings together all of L&Q's social and economic programmes in one place. The Foundation's mission is to create positive, lasting change for residents. Over the last few years throughout the pandemic, and the cost of living crisis, we have adapted quickly to meet the changing needs of those living in L&Q homes.

The Foundation has gone through its own changes in the last year. In June 2023 we created a new structure focusing on two strategic outcomes:



To support L&Q residents to increase their incomes and financial resilience to help sustain tenancies and maximise income.



To increase community activity and investment in our core neighbourhoods so they remain places people are proud to live.

These refined outcomes build on our previous ones, and they have enabled us to move to a geographical structure with multidisciplinary teams.

Our North and South Regional teams consist of our Thriving Places and Successful Tenancies teams. Thriving Places manages our community centres, enables community development, and makes sure social value created by our supply chain focusses on residents' priorities.

Our Successful Tenancies teams deliver social support to residents with tenancy sustainment, debt and money management and employment support. Our small central Impact and Reporting team measures and reports against our social

impact across all Foundation activities, so we can better understand the difference we make and improve our services.

This year's annual report provides an overview of all Foundation activities delivered throughout 2023/24 against our two strategic outcomes.

The report is grouped into two sections; the impact on individuals living in L&Q homes, and the impact on communities where L&Q operates.





Key achievements

In 2023/24, we invested £7.4m to help us deliver against our mission.



244

People helped into paid work across a range of industries



421

Of our most vulnerable residents supported to stabilise their tenancies



£8.2m

Gained for over 2,700 residents by helping them reduce their debts and outgoings or through new income



£51m

Combined social value generated

Alongside this, we have been developing our new area-based to Community Investment approach and embedded our new ways of working and team structure.

About the residents we work with

As a housing association with over 108,000 homes where more than 250,000 people make their homes with us, we serve an incredibly diverse community, with a wide range of backgrounds, needs and life experiences.

The new Consumer Standards, published by the Regulator of Social Housing, emphasise the importance of delivering fair and equitable outcomes for residents. The standards expect us to use relevant information and data to understand the diverse needs of residents and make sure services are accessible and inclusive.

We have analysed the information we collect from residents who use the services delivered directly by the Foundation, including employment support, tenancy sustainment and Pound Advice. We have compared this to analysis carried out by the Research team in July 2023 to understand whether our services are accessed by a representative sample of the wider L&Q resident population.

Based on the data available, the demographics of L&Q residents using Foundation services broadly reflect those of the L&Q resident base.

However, when overlaid with information available regarding demographics and rent arrears, we can see that the Foundation does work with many of the resident demographics who experience higher financial difficulties, resulting in increased debt.

We are proud to provide an inclusive offer to all residents within L&Q, regardless of their background. We know we need to strengthen our customer data, which is why over the next twelve months we will make improvements to our data collecting to ensure that we can better understand who is using, and how they are benefitting from, Foundation services and activities

A more accurate picture of who is, and who is not using our services will enable us to better design targeted interventions to those residents that are not benefitting or provide reassurance that we are helping residents who need our support most. The L&Q Foundation will seek to align our demographic-information capture consistently across all Foundation projects and programmes.



We serve an incredibly diverse community, with a wide range of backgrounds, needs and life experiences.

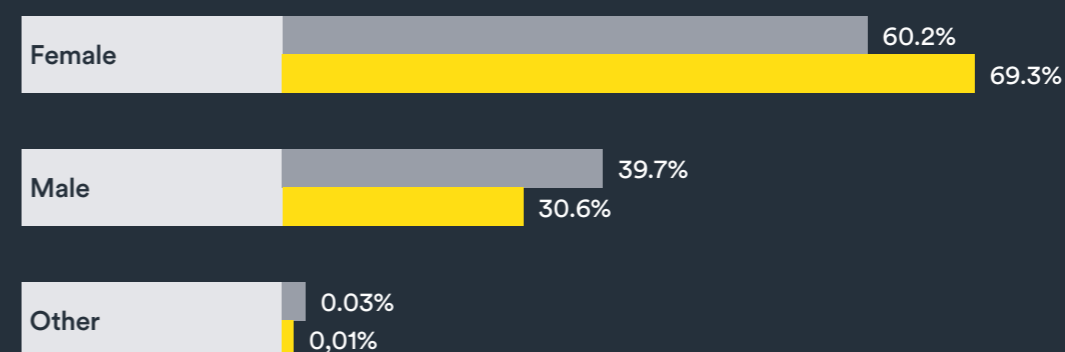


Residents by ethnicity

Ethnicity	L&Q resident base	Average Arrears Balance	L&Q Foundation customers
Asian or Asian British	8.9%	£380.02	7.9%
Black, African, Caribbean, or Black British	25.8%	£729.38	40.0%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	5.1%	£651.31	8.3%
Other Ethnic Group	2.9%	£503.54	5.1%
White	57.4%	£417.46	38.7%
Base	70,281	-	1,460



Residents by gender



■ L&Q Resident base ■ L&Q Foundation customers

Strategic Outcome: 1

To support L&Q residents to increase their income and financial resilience to help sustain tenancies and maximise income.

The first of our two outcomes focuses on how the Foundation supports L&Q residents to increase their income and financial resilience to help sustain tenancies and maximise income. As well as maximising income, Foundation activities enable residents to become more resilient to changes in personal circumstances to help them sustain their tenancies.

Successful Tenancies

We support residents to develop the skills and experience they need to get into paid employment. Our employment support activities include a job brokerage service which gives residents access to high-quality job opportunities. Our in-house Employment Support Leads also provide mentoring and one-to-one support, and help with work placements, training and CV writing.

Our Employment Support team helped 244 people get jobs with a wide range of organisations, including within L&Q, Wates, and Axis.

In 2023/24, Wates, one of our Major Works Investment Programme Partners, offered eight L&Q residents the opportunity to complete an accredited Domestic Energy and Retrofit Assessor (DEA) course. Funded by Wates, the course is the first step to getting a job in one of the fastest growing industries as the UK strives to become net zero. All residents completed the course and now have the opportunity to complete the qualifications and find a job. One of the latest opportunities offered by one of our legal supply chain partners, Trowers & Hamblins LLP, gives our residents the chance to take part in their flagship Routes to Work programme, providing work experience opportunities in various areas of the organisation.

Last year, we held two Jobs Fairs at our offices, bringing together a range of employers and L&Q residents and others from the local community.

In June, 431 people came to meet twenty employers who were advertising around 600 job vacancies. Advertised roles were wide-ranging and included administration, construction, and customer services. In February, we hosted our second event as part of National Apprenticeship Week, eighty-two residents and members of the wider community attended. Our supply chain partners attended both events to share their vacancies and apprenticeship opportunities, including Durkan, United Living, and Wates.

In November, L&Q hosted a 'Meet the Employer' event in partnership with Axis. The event featured Axis employees Victoria Basham, Head of HR; Joe Marshall, Customer Experience Manager; and Dimple Jamnadas, Recruitment Coordinator. Commenting on his experience, Joe said, "I found the L&Q work fair thoroughly worthwhile. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet potential candidates and the interest in joining the Axis family from those who attended was more than I expected. I'm really looking forward to the next invitation."

We are committed to getting people into jobs that are for the long term. In the North West 93% of people we helped to get into work were still in work three months later.

During 2023/24, we have been supporting residents to improve their resilience through delivering services aimed at increasing levels of wellbeing. Our Tenancy Sustainment team offers a range of support, including helping residents to maximise the benefits they receive, providing budgeting advice, and improving their ability to cope with everyday life. In 2023/24, the team supported 441 residents to stabilise their tenancies and avoid legal enforcement action, which could have led to eviction. After working with our Tenancy Sustainment Leads, over half of residents (54%) felt more confident and almost two thirds (60%) were managing better financially.



54%

Felt more confident



60%

Were managing better financially

We also provided residents with financial capability support and debt advice through our Pound Advice service, managed for us through our partner We are Group. In 2023/24, over 2,700 residents used Pound Advice, gaining a total of more than £8.2m in additional income. After accessing Pound Advice, over 60% of respondents reported managing their finances better and over 62% feel like their debt is less of a burden.

Last year, we issued over 1,500 fuel vouchers to residents, which is around £74k in value, helping with the increasing cost of utilities.

Offering the vouchers digitally enables residents to use the vouchers quickly without having to print them. We also issued around 1,000 foodbank vouchers for residents who needed this emergency support. The Foundation's Personal Support Fund (L&Q's hardship fund) provided support to almost one hundred residents, enabling the purchase of essential goods such as beds, bedding and furnishings, carpets, white goods, and vital help-to-work items like new work clothes or transport for those joining the workforce.

Case study

61 year old L&Q resident Miss B, who lives alone with challenging health conditions, was referred to our Tenancy Sustainment team who helped her to complete an application for the Personal Support Fund.

With the fund we were able to upgrade Miss B's old and inefficient cooker and fridge freezer, helping address her GP's concerns around nutrition and diet.



“

From when I started working with (my Tenancy Sustainment Lead) everything went well, I have no complaints!

Miss B - L&Q Resident

”

Strategic Outcome: 2

To increase community activity and investment in our core neighbourhoods so they remain places people are proud to live.

The second of our two outcomes focuses on how the Foundation supports the communities where L&Q residents live. In 2023/24 the Foundation adopted a new approach to placemaking in existing communities. In September 2023 we reshaped our team to bring a place-based Community Investment approach. This focuses on eleven geographical areas, a selection of 10 Greater London Boroughs, plus Trafford in the north west. These have been identified as high priority because of the density of homes L&Q has in those areas, combined with elevated levels of deprivation, and feedback from residents including from our Regional Committees.



Beaumont Estate, afternoon tea dance

Thriving Places

Place-based Community Investment can take many forms and is best thought of as a range of interventions. Our area-based plans will be determined by what local people tell us their community needs, our strategic outcomes, and what we can offer. Our approach is one of building on the strengths in local communities. We supported 120 organisations in 2023/24, with direct funding or capacity building sessions, designed to provide necessary skills and training for community organisations to grow and prosper. Organisations already supported include Elephant Park Business Forum (Urban Elephant Festival 2024), Trafford Veterans (capacity building income generation), and Salaam Peace (girls' football and fitness).

In 2023/24, we continued to invest significantly in activities to increase physical wellbeing.

Our partnership with Sport England enabled us to distribute almost £66k of funding to run around forty events over the lifetime of the Get Set Go programme. Get Set Go is one of the Foundation's flagship programmes, created in consultation with residents, and delivering for a diverse range of resident demographics. During 2023/24 Get Set Go sessions included dance classes, Tai Chi, chair dance, Karate, and football.



Get Set Go!

At L&Q, we have a strong volunteering programme, offering staff up to 21 hours per year to volunteer. In 2023/24, 90 staff volunteered over 645 hours of their time and expertise across food banks and local charities.

In addition to direct funding, we deliver capacity-building sessions to community organisations to improve their sustainability, focusing on monitoring and evaluation, financial planning, and other business areas. We offer local organisations reduced rates or free use of our community centres. During 2023/24 we provided over 1,700 hours of free or discounted venue hire, totalling over £61k of in-kind social value, across London and the north west, for activities such as Tenants and Residents Association events, food banks, physical activity and wellbeing sessions, or workspace for charities and community organisations.

The L&Q Foundation looks after twenty one community centres, located within boroughs where L&Q residents live. Our community centres are crucial for building partnerships. For example at our Lewington Centre, Lewisham, we partnered with Age UK, Lewisham, and Southwark Council to provide 240 meals across six weeks for older residents affected by the cost of living crisis. Limelight, our community centre in Trafford, hosts a substantial number of community days, including International Women's Day, with information from Trafford Domestic Abuse Service, Trafford rape crisis support, Alzheimer's Society and more. The days provide informative talks and engaging performances to help strengthen the local community.



1,700

Hours of free or discounted venue hire



£61k

Over £61k of in-kind social value



International Women's Day at Limelight

Social Value

In 2023/24 we have continued to measure social value using two approaches, looking at positive impact on levels of an individual's personal wellbeing and the wider social value created for society through savings to the public finances.

Social Value in the Supply Chain

The L&Q Major Works Investment Programme presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make significant impact through the social value provided by supply chain partners. In 2023/24 we have confirmed that our Major Works partners delivered over £23.6m worth of social value, using the Social Value Portal's National TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) which is the sector's standard tool for measuring supplier social value. This has been achieved through a number of outcomes, each delivering significant positive impact to residents and their communities. In one of the most significant contributions directly impacting on the lives of our residents, our supply chain partners, Axis, Jigsaw, Breyer, Wates and Equans helped fund our Turlogh O'Brien Scholarship for 2023/24.

The Turlogh O'Brien Scholarship programme enables young people who would not have the means to go to university without significant financial support to undertake an undergraduate degree. In 2023/24 we have six students studying courses including Sports Science, Mechanical Engineering, Medicine, Biology, Neuroscience and Computer Science at a range of institutions.

Our supply chain offers lots of opportunities for young people, for example sixteen students took part in a week-long work experience programme delivered in partnership with Wates, one of our Major Works Investment Programme partners. Students participated in site visits and parliamentary discussions and received help to improve their employability including CV and interview support.



Work experience students at the Regents Wharf site

“

We were lucky enough to visit a Wates project that solely focuses on sustainability. In every aspect, Wates is striving to incorporate sustainability throughout the project.

Makbule, a Year 13 student

”

Social Value in the Foundation

We used the HACT Wellbeing Valuation Approach to calculate the impact that our programmes have on the wellbeing of our residents and communities.

In the 2023/24 calculation we were able to include the work delivered by our Employment team, Tenancy Sustainment team, Pound Advice, the Sport England-funded projects and legacy Place Maker Fund projects. The combined total of wellbeing impact calculated across the year

came to a significant £27.3m, a ratio of roughly £7 social value generated by every £2 invested (2:7).

The Foundation is proud to share that it achieved a combined total of £51m in social value during 2023/24. This is thanks to improved ways of working across the business, increased effectiveness in capturing data, and the pioneering work done by our Thriving Places team in conjunction with Procurement to ensure that social value is contractually embedded in all Major Works Investment Programmes.



Our Major Works partners





The year ahead

We will collaborate closely with involved residents through reporting our progress at Regional Committees and by engaging with them in their local communities. Our new structure is geographically focused, which mirrors the housing management structure, this will enable us to collaborate far more closely with Neighbourhood Housing Leads. Our intention is to invest £1m into community development activities, to grow and develop our new area based approach. We will continue to explore external funding opportunities, having already secured £500k from Sport England to continue to deliver physical activity and wellbeing activities.

We must continue to seize the opportunity that L&Q's major investment programme offers to generate social value from our supply chain partners and ensure we use it to deliver things that matter to L&Q residents and their communities. We are committed to delivering more social value through our supply chain in 2024/25, as our Community Development Leads strengthen their partnership working and monitor the performance building on the success of 2023/24. An example of this is that we will create a new Social Value Fund this will be available for supply chain partners to contribute to if they are unable to deliver their own programmes or would prefer us to do it for them.

In 2024/25 our Job Plus pilot in partnership with the DWP, Communities that Work and the Learning and Work Institute will see us providing intensive area based employment support to Beaumont Estate residents in Waltham Forest to help them get into sustainable employment. This flexible approach has been something that the sector has been calling for many years

through the Communities that Work partnership. We're aiming to place 198 L&Q residents into high quality employment this year. This target reflects our new focus on core boroughs only. We aim to deliver an effective, resident focussed service with fewer resources than previous years.

We will ensure that the support we offer is consistent for all L&Q residents, who rely on it, no matter where they live. This includes Tenancy Sustainment, Debt Advice, emergency funding and Employment Support. We're aiming to sustain 416 tenancies, keeping residents in their homes when they find themselves in crisis. Our financial advice and debt services aims to recover more than £12m in benefits, back payments, debt written off and additional financial benefits, for 4,000 L&Q residents across London and the North West.

L&Q continues to chair the G15, the Foundation team will convene and chair the G15 Strategic Community Investment group. We will work with Community Investment colleagues across the G15 to increase the impact of our work through collaboration, sharing best practice, and capitalising on the opportunity that the platform provides us. In partnership we will produce the annual G15 Social Impact report, which promotes the socio-economic impact of housing associations activities.

We will continue to roll out our new, area based, approach to Community Investment in our core boroughs. This will see us working in partnership with residents and community stakeholders to produce local area actions plans, which will have a demonstrable impact in the communities we operate in.



For more information
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