

Social Investment Impact Report 2024/25



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1. Introduction

We are proud to share our second Social Investment Impact Report, reflecting our progress in embedding social value across the Council during the 2024/25 financial year.

Since publishing our first impact report for 2023/24, we have deepened our understanding of what meaningful impact looks like and how best to measure it.

Last year we piloted the use of social value and Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodologies, allowing us to calculate the financial value of a project's impact.

While monetised social value remains an important part of our approach, helping us demonstrate value for money and make informed decisions, we recognise that numbers alone don't tell the full story.

In this report we are placing greater emphasis on our residents' voices and understanding the lived experiences behind the data.

This report builds on the foundations laid in our 2023/24 report, and continues to align our work with the five key themes set out in our Social Investment Strategy:



Promoting
fairness



Supporting
local
organisations



Health and
wellbeing



Employment
and skills



Sustainability

As we move forward, we remain focused on learning, improving, and ensuring that our decisions and investments deliver real, felt change for the people of Kensington and Chelsea.



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2. Methodology

What is Social Investment?

Social investment is how we describe our work to get the best possible social return from the goods and services we buy, and the property, parks, and housing which we manage on behalf of our residents.

We do this by investing in our voluntary and community sector, building partnerships with anchor institutions and businesses, and procuring goods and services to benefit our residents in a meaningful way.

The projects in this report fall under six key areas:



What is social value?

Social value is a way of describing the wider positive impact a project or service has on residents, communities and the local economy. It's our way of understanding how our work improves people's quality of life and wellbeing.

How do we measure social value?

We consider each project's full social, economic and environmental impact based on the needs of our residents, businesses and communities. Where possible, we calculate the financial value of these benefits, which helps us to demonstrate value for money and make informed decisions.

We organise the data under each of the following themes:

- Promoting fairness
- Supporting local organisations
- Health and wellbeing
- Employment and skills
- Sustainability

This process allows us to calculate a Social Return on Investment (SROI). This is a simple ratio that shows how much social value, in pounds, is created for every £1 spent. For example, in 2024/25, our libraries service generated £4.33 in social value for every £1 of cost.

Our approach to calculation is accredited by the Institute for Social Value. For more detail, visit the Council's website.

Types of social value

When we calculate social value, we consider two different types:

1. Intrinsic social value

This is the inherent worth of an organisation, team, or service in terms of its benefits to society. This includes factors such as being a living wage employer, hiring local residents or using small businesses in its supply chain.

Unlike added social value, intrinsic social value does not only refer to social value generated in Kensington and Chelsea, but by the organisation as a whole. We will state where we have included intrinsic social value in the social value and SROI figures of a project.

2. Added social value

This refers to the broader value that an organisation, project, or service contributes to society beyond its primary or statutory function.

For example, if a building contractor runs free CV and interview support to local residents, that is an added social value.

Assumptions

To make these social value calculations, we must make certain assumptions which are openly discussed and verified with stakeholders.

An example of an assumption we use in this report is the “outcome duration”, or how long we assume a positive impact lasts for residents based on tangible available evidence.

For instance, the benefit from attending a weekly wellbeing session for a year is assumed to last longer than attending a single, one-off community event.

We have been careful and cautious about our assumptions to avoid overclaiming value.

3. Headline data

Social value produced by impact area

Social impact	Economic impact	Environmental impact
The impact of social value initiatives on residents and communities.	The impact of social value initiatives on the local economy.	The impact of social value initiatives on the environment.
£10.19M	£14.27M	£1.31M

Social value produced by social investment theme

Promoting fairness	Supporting local organisations	Health and wellbeing
£2.49M	£359.07K	£379.89K
Employment and skills	Sustainability	
£18.65M	£1.31M	

Project highlights

Digital inclusion	Libraries and archives	Social investment leases
The DigitALL project supported 280 residents with digital skills and produced £289k in social value , resulting in a social return on investment of £3.15 for every £1 spent .	The Libraries service generated nearly £13 million in social value . This results in a social return on investment of £4.33 for every £1 spent .	An increase in overall social value produced across our social investment leases when compared to 23/24 figures.



4. Promoting fairness

This section of the report highlights projects that align with the goal set out in our 2023-2027 Council Plan – to make life fairer for people who face the greatest disadvantages and challenges. It also supports our 2025-2029 Fairer Action Plan which intends to break the cycle of inequality in the borough and increase opportunities for everyone.

We do this through investing in projects and organisations that support residents in need. Two key examples are our Money Cafes and digital skills support:

Financial Inclusion Money Cafes

Who we are

The Financial Inclusion Money Cafes, based in Kensal, Portobello, World's End and Henry Dickens, provide financial advice and cost of living support to residents.

What they do

- The Money Cafes support residents with welfare and debt casework, financial health checks, digital inclusion, and Universal Credit migration. In the 2024/25 financial year, the Financial Inclusion team processed 451 cases, around half of which were attributed to the Money Cafes. The team also:
- Distributed £400 worth of warm clothing and 50 bags of period products.
- Provided extensive support to residents beyond the cafés, including distributing 36 dehumidifiers.
- Completed 50 financial health checks as part of the Warm and Well project, and 115 financial health checks for new tenants.
- Distributed 237 free SIM cards and 20 mobile phones, and arranged 57 broadband connections in partnership with Community Fibre and Fibre Optic.
- Issued 288 crisis payments.
- Distributed £445,330 to Housing Management tenants through the Tenancy Sustainment Fund.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): £1.7 million

Social return on investment: £3.66 for every £1 spent.

This figure is based on outcomes such as the wellbeing benefits residents derived from access to financial advice services and from receiving crisis payments.

Digital inclusion

Who they are

The Digital Inclusion team upskills residents who struggle with online access. This support improves health, job opportunities and access to training, helping to reduce financial and social inequalities and boosting engagement with the Council, NHS and other services.

The programme has coordinated recycling, gifting and free support, using local and national resources to help residents and organisations in the borough.

What they do

Between April 2024 and March 2025:

- 71 frontline Council staff completed digital inclusion training.
- 11 monthly meetings were chaired by different partners in the local cross sector K&C Digital Inclusion Partnership.
- £41k in social value commitments were made by Council suppliers in the form of monetary grants, digital equipment donations and volunteering.
- Over 630 residents received one-to-one digital support from volunteers, 295 residents graduated from the DigitALL programme, 330 enrolled in ICT classes, and 188 were trained on the NHS app.
- 138 repurposed pieces of Council equipment were donated to local VCS organisations, and 120 devices valued at £14,375 were provided for residents' personal use.
- 104 items of accessibility were provided to Libraries and VCS organisations, and 20 items were provided to the Kensington and Chelsea Sensory Impairment Team.

Case study: The DigitALL project

Last year we reported on the DigitALL project, led by Open Age, which gives older adults and those with learning disabilities tailored digital skills support, along with access to devices and data.

This project supports participants to achieve personalised digital inclusion goals through device and data provision, personalised skills assessment and 1:1 or group support

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): £289,000

Social return on investment: £3.14 for every £1 spent

This calculation is based on outcomes experienced by residents, such as improved digital skills, mental health and wellbeing, and reduced social isolation.

5. Supporting local organisations

We also prioritise fairness and transparency by supporting the thriving network of voluntary and community sector organisations that provide vital support to our residents.

We invest in them through grants, contracts and the use of property.

One example is our Voluntary Sector Support Fund (VSSF), which gave £1.1 million in grants to 20 voluntary sector organisations in 2024/25. This funding has helped organisations to expand their operations, develop links with other local service providers, employ more staff, and launch new community projects.

One organisation focused on providing early help support to families said that VSSF funding had allowed it to “focus on expanding our reach, welcoming more families, and fostering a sense of community”.

Leighton House Museum

Who they are

This art museum and historic house showcases an expansive collection of nineteenth century art. Following a major refurbishment, the museum now has new visitor facilities, shop and café, step-free access and a dedicated learning centre.

What they do

In 2024/25, the museum’s programmes reached over 1,120 school participants and more than 2,190 participants through public and free community events, including creative workshops, talks and wellbeing activities.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): More than £6 million

Social return on investment: £3.43 for every £1 spent

Social investment leases

This approach sees us offer Council-owned property to community organisations at a reduced rent. In return, they deliver clear, measurable social benefits for our residents.

Our social investment leases are designed to find a balance between delivering financial outcomes and social benefits.

Here, we update on two of our social investment leases introduced in the 2023/24 impact report – the Children’s Book Project and Worlds End and Lots Road Big Local.

World’s End and Lots Road (WELR) Big Local

Who they are:

A community group which was set up in 2015 to support people of all ages in the south of the borough.

What they do:

WELR Big Local provides a variety of free sessions aimed at improving residents’ wellbeing and skills. Due to its popularity, the group needed a larger space and in December 2023 moved to Council-owned premises on the World’s End estate.

The extra space allows Big Local to host double the number of people at in-person sessions, including boxing, first aid, digital skills and employability training.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): £897,000

Social return on investment: £5.16 for every £1 spent

In their own words: What is the impact of World's End and Lots Road Big Local?:

"I am more mobile and the fitness classes gave me more self-confidence."

"As well as physical health, attending the sessions improves my mental health and wellbeing."

"The most enjoyable part of the sessions is meeting others and working in a group."



Children's Book Project

Who they are:

A North Kensington charity that redistributes thousands of new and preloved books to children and their families across London and the UK.

What they do:

The charity's book gifting activities give children who may not have had access to books at home the opportunity to choose books they would like to read. This initiative has been shown to significantly improve children's happiness, health, mental wellbeing, and self-esteem.

Additionally, the charity supports the most socio-economically disadvantaged families in Kensington and Chelsea, by donating books to children, schools, and clothes banks.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): More than £158,000

Social return on investment: £3.28 for every £1 spent

This figure is based on outcomes experienced by residents in the borough, including improved wellbeing for residents who volunteer for the project, and improved confidence and self-esteem for children receiving gifted books.

In their own words: What is the impact of the Children's Book Project?

"The Children's Book Project has brought so much joy to Barlby! Thanks to your amazing book donations, our pupils have been able to take home stories that spark their imaginations and inspire a real love of reading. Whether it's been through brilliant school visits, fun focus groups, or simply the magic of finding a book to keep forever, the Children's Book Project has become a special part of our school life." Barlby Primary School



“Many of our families are struggling financially, and a lot of our children don’t have any books at home, so it was wonderful to be able to send something meaningful home with them.” Dalgarno Trust

“We emailed every school in Kensington and Chelsea, letting them know they could come by our office to collect and help spread the word. The response from the local community was incredibly positive. Since then, we’ve received so many thank-yous and pats on the back. It’s made us feel even more connected and committed to staying together as a community.” Winkworths Kensington

“I currently have nearly 30 books in my room, and while I have finished reading some, I often revisit them to deepen my understanding. They are among my most precious possessions.” Adult user of K&C Clothes Bank

“The books that you provide to us are really popular. Most of the families that use K&C Clothes Bank have very little. The children don’t have toys or books so it makes a huge difference that they are able to choose high quality books from us.” K&C Clothes Bank





6. Health and wellbeing

We are focused on improving the health and wellbeing of our residents, as set out in our Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2033. We also provide social care for adults and children with additional needs, tackling health inequalities between our most affluent and deprived areas.

This section highlights projects, services, and partnerships that aim to tackle these challenges.

Libraries and Archives

Who they are

We have six libraries in Kensington and Chelsea, which welcomed 615,000 visitors between April 2024 and March 2025.

What they do

Our libraries offer more than access to books and the mental health benefits of reading; they provide learning opportunities for children and adults, help reduce social isolation, and promote digital inclusion to those who struggle to get online.

Case study:

RBKC Adult Learning Programme

Funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and launched in 2023, this programme offers creative, engaging courses to support learners seeking employment, continuing education, pursuing creative interests or trying to improve their physical or mental health.

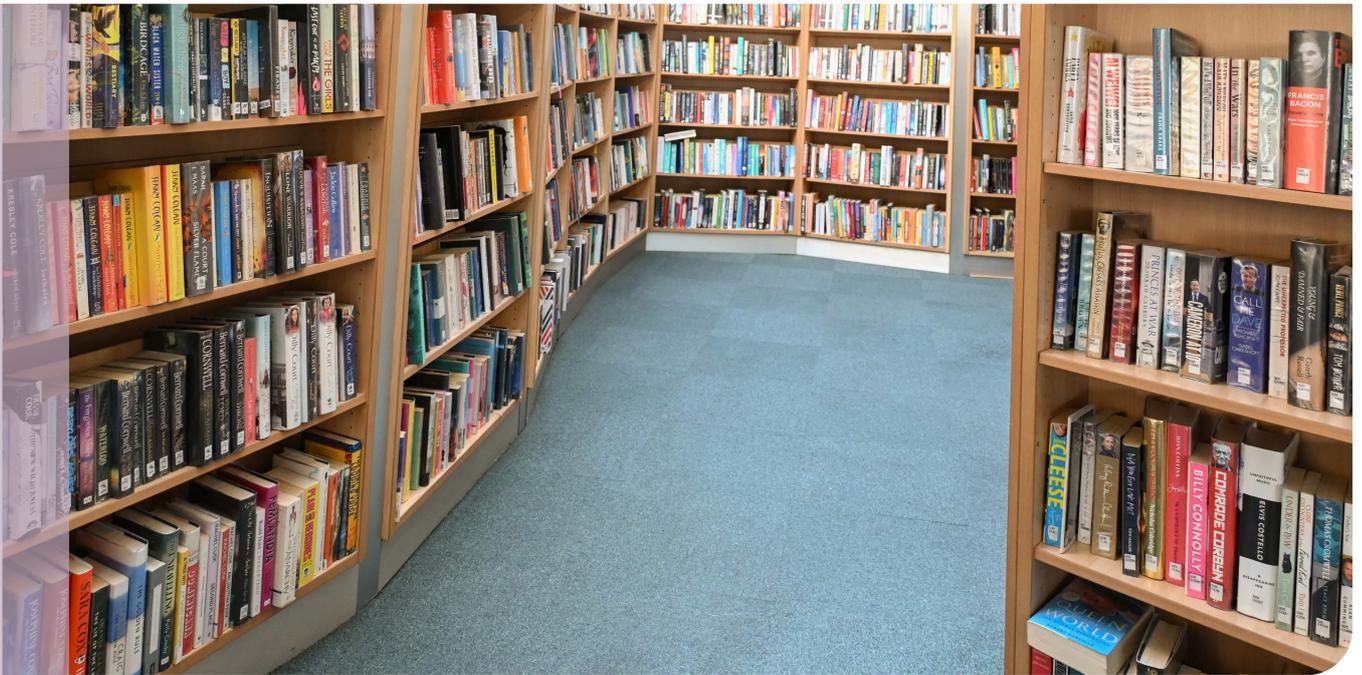
In the 2024/25 financial year:

- 38 courses were offered by 15 tutors to 340 residents
- £97,000 was received from the GLA with £59,000 spent on tutor fees and £20,500 generated as Libraries income through room hire
- £17,000 surplus was earmarked for programme development, including new equipment (e.g. sewing machines for Kensal Sewing Hub)
- Participants experienced benefits ranging from increased confidence and motivation to pursue employment or further education to strengthened mental health and self-esteem and opportunities to build social connections and a sense of community.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): £13 million

Social return on investment: £4.33 for every £1 spent

This figure is based on the wellbeing benefits visitors and library members derived from accessing the libraries, as well the intrinsic social value experienced by the many who work and volunteer to support service delivery.



In their own words: What is the impact of the libraries?

“We attend Saturday craft sessions weekly and they are amazing. The sessions are always full of people and my kids love them.” Visitor to Brompton Library

“The staff are amazing, especially the lady who does the children activities and decorates the kids’ corner so nicely!! We are so lucky to have this library in the neighbourhood and I am very grateful.” Visitor to Brompton Library

“I love the space and the stock – the selection of books in the children’s library is amazing. I visit the library twice a week and always find enough new books to take home to entertain my daughter.” Visitor to Kensington Central Library

“This is the best library I have been to. Very inclusive and you can clearly see the effort and thought that goes into the activities and display of books. We appreciate the staff they are all so very kind and helpful.” Visitor to Kensal Library

“I absolutely love this library. It’s local and an anchor of the community. The library service is bursting with resources, which I am taking advantage of. I love this library!” Visitor to North Kensington Library

Community Catalysts

Who they are:

A social enterprise that helps local people to start their own small business or enterprise to support their community. The Community Catalysts work closely with our Adult Social Care service in both Kensington and Chelsea, and our neighbouring borough Westminster.

What they do:

Community Catalysts enable older people and residents with learning disabilities, dementia and autism to live their lives in the way they want to. The organisation supports residents to set up micro-enterprises offering support and activities, including photography, sumo wrestling, and music therapy.

They also partner with voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough which provide support including access to spaces from which to deliver activities.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): More than £544,600

Social return on investment: £3.15 for every £1 spent

This figure is based on outcomes experienced by residents in the borough, including the wellbeing and economic benefits of new employment opportunities being created and existing jobs being safeguarded because of these microenterprises.

In their own words: What is the impact of the Community Catalysts project?

“I am grateful for the thought and support offered by Community Catalysts in helping to launch my enterprise. This is as exciting as it is daunting, as although I have competed and coached for several years, it is at this time that I consider myself in the blessed situation to formally launch my club.” **Founder of Deep Sumo**

“Do the Mic Thing has literally transformed the lives of some of our most vulnerable young people. The magic of making music whilst providing a place to be heard has created a refuge for such youngsters in amongst the chaos of growing up.” **Holland Park School**

“Do the Mic Thing has significantly impacted members of the North Kensington Youth Collective, providing a wellness-focused experience through music. Notably, the programme has become a favourite at our girls-only night, and has drawn more young women to the studio, a space previously dominated by men.” **North Kensington Youth Collective**

“Since partnering with Community Catalysts in May 2024, I’ve been truly impressed by the powerful, free support they provide. Bhupinder has gone beyond expectations by guiding us with essential templates, step-by-step advice and consistent encouragement that has strengthened our confidence. As a small business with limited connections, Bhupinder’s proactive support has been both heartening and transformative.” **Founder of Moving Waves**



Leisure contract – GLL

Who they are:

GLL is a charitable social enterprise and workers cooperative that operates Kensington Leisure Centre and Chelsea Sports Centre.

The centres align with the Council’s goal to improve the health and wellbeing of residents through more physical activity. Any profits are reinvested into GLL’s services, which has led to millions of pounds being invested into sport and leisure.

What they do:

Through its Putting Communities First programme, GLL has directly supported the health and wellbeing of residents through:

- A free membership card for all residents, offering discounts. There are currently 3,540 active card holders in the borough
- Free access for helpers, creating more opportunities for those with disabilities and currently benefiting 330 people
- Ten community programmes delivered alongside the Council, including play streets, pop-up sports and parks events
- A Healthy Eating Charter implemented across all centres in the borough
- £25,350 in funding for 35 talented young sportspeople in Kensington and Chelsea
- Employment, apprenticeship and volunteering opportunities for residents. Currently, 22 per cent of GLL’s workforce resides in the borough.

Social Value

GLL uses a Social Value calculator to produce monetised social value figures, which is different to our social value and SROI methodology.

Using this methodology, GLL calculates that in the 2024/2025 financial year, it produced £4.5 million in social value.



7. Employment and skills

Our goal is to tackle unemployment and low pay by working with partners to provide training and support to residents who need it. With budgets under pressure and demand increasing, we need to find innovative ways to achieve this goal and to use our contracts and projects to bridge the gap for our residents.

Social Value in Housing Management Capital Delivery Programme

Who they are:

The team engages with residents to understand their social value needs, and then works directly with contractors to embed targeted, tangible social value in the capital projects procured within our Housing directorate.

What they do:

In 2024/25, the team secured over £3 million in social value commitments from 16 contractors, one subcontractor, and three consultants, with £582k delivered to date and a further £2.5 million committed.

Highlights include:

- Working with housing delivery partners Jones Building Group, TSG Group, Capital Property & Construction Consultants and Travis Perkins Managed Services to create a storage unit for a socially inclusive market at World's End Estate
- Partnering with Kleemann Lifts to restore a long-defunct disability lift at St. Cuthbert Centre
- The Council's property services team employed one RBKC resident as a decorator, provided four work experience placements, supported employability training and offered van and driver support to North Kensington Community Kitchen
- OpenView provided community support, environmental contributions including £1,000 to Holland Park Ecology Centre, and digital

Employment and Skills – Economic Development

Who they are:

The Council employs an employment opportunities co-ordinator, alongside a construction and partnerships adviser to help residents overcome employment barriers. One of the roles is jointly funded by Cadogan Estates.

What they do:

Both roles connect residents not in education, employment, or training with work experience, apprenticeships, and job opportunities in construction and other sectors.

Between April 2024 and March 2025:

- A total of 314 local residents were engaged with support towards work, with 48 local residents gaining employment – 17 in construction and 31 in other sectors.
- 105 businesses engaged with the Employment and Skills programme.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): £343,000

Social return on investment: £3.43 for every £1 spent





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In their own words: What is the impact of the Employment and Skills team?

“We were looking for a job role for a porter in the Chelsea area and had interviewed numerous candidates over several months in 2024 with not much success. I was then introduced to Paras and he provided us with a CV of a suitable candidate within a week. I am pleased that we were able to offer the position to the candidate, who is now approaching three months at our development with glowing reviews from all involved.” A Cadogan supplier

“We had been looking to recruit a full-time team member and had tried all the usual channels but couldn’t find the right fit for our team. After meeting with Paras, he was in touch a week later with a prospective candidate, who we employed and is a great asset to the team. I couldn’t recommend this service enough and only wish it was available in other locations in the UK.” Retailer on Sloane Square

“I lost my job in May this year It was so devastating. I really had to work hard at picking myself up and staying focused to get a job. I stopped to talk with Paras about the type of work I could do, and we very quickly got onto CVs he helped me restructure my CV just from that initial conversation. After that over a period of weeks he set me up with a job that was tailor made for me. I was down and he really helped me.” A World’s End Estate resident



Waste management contract – Suez

Who they are

The Suez group currently holds the contract for waste management in Kensington and Chelsea.

What they do

Last year, Suez committed £40k in donations through a community fund, with £30,000 donated to The Clement James Centre, an education charity based in North Kensington, and £10,000 donated to Refettorio Felix, a drop-in centre and community kitchen serving vulnerable people at St Cuthbert's Church in Earls Court.

This year, Suez has:

- Provided interview skills workshops and volunteered at Refettorio Felix
- Hosted eight students from the Harlequins Rugby Hitz programme
- Improved sustainability by installing planters sown with wildflower seeds at all Suez sites in the borough. These have been registered as part of the Kensington and Chelsea Bee Superhighway
- Electrified part of its fleet, with five small street cleaning vehicles now fully electric, and switched its fleet of diesel vehicles to hydrotreated vegetable oil fuels.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): More than £243,000

This figure is based on outcomes experienced by residents in the borough, including through community volunteering and donations towards community projects.



8. Environment and sustainability

We are dedicated to creating a greener future for our communities by addressing climate change, promoting sustainability and enhancing the usability of green spaces for everyone.

Our Social Investment projects are making significant strides towards sustainability and eco-friendly practices, contributing to a vibrant Kensington and Chelsea for all residents.

Parks and leisure contract – Idverde

Who they are

Idverde maintains the borough's 28 parks, two cemeteries, over 60 highway sites, grass verges, planters and more on behalf of the Council.

What they do

Far from simply maintaining our green spaces, Idverde produces impact in Kensington and Chelsea by:

- Offering volunteering, apprenticeships, and supported internship opportunities, welcoming 6,905 volunteers in the 2024/25 financial year
- Taking on a supported intern as a permanent member of staff and supporting another through a 12-week placement
- Providing staff with formal training, such as an NVQ level 2 in Horticulture, which six staff members completed in 2024/25
- Fully funding the complete renovation of the Ecology Centre Garden, which was completed in spring 2025, and providing plants and labour for a replant of the Isaac Paulos Centre Garden.

Case study:

The Supported Internship Programme

Idverde participates in the Council's Supported Internship programme, for young people aged 16-24 with learning difficulties or learning disabilities who need extra support in finding employment.

Students receive a study programme, with most of the learning done in a work placement. Alongside their time at the employer, young people are able to study for relevant employability, English and maths qualifications.

Idverde committed to hosting around 528 hours of work experience from October 2024 to June 2025 after having done the same for the previous academic year. Over the last two years, Idverde has offered paid employment to two interns following their completion of the programme.

Social value calculation (Apr 24-Mar 25): More than £2.6 million

This figure is based on outcomes experienced by residents in the borough, including improved wellbeing through volunteering in our parks and green spaces, as well as apprenticeships and employment of local residents.



9. Looking forward

Local authorities across the country are facing budget pressures due to higher demand for services, including homelessness support and special educational needs and disabilities provision, alongside inflationary pressures driving up costs.

In Kensington and Chelsea, this will be made worse by significant reductions in central government funding over the next few years. This will require the Council to make difficult decisions to protect the services that are most important to residents, and makes it more important than ever that we get the most value for our residents from every asset and resource at our disposal.

As we look ahead, our work will continue to be guided by the ambitions set out in the Council Plan, and in particular our Fairer Action Plan 2025–2029, which commits us to taking targeted action to tackle the causes of inequality and deprivation - focusing on health, employment, and education, where the Council can make the biggest difference.

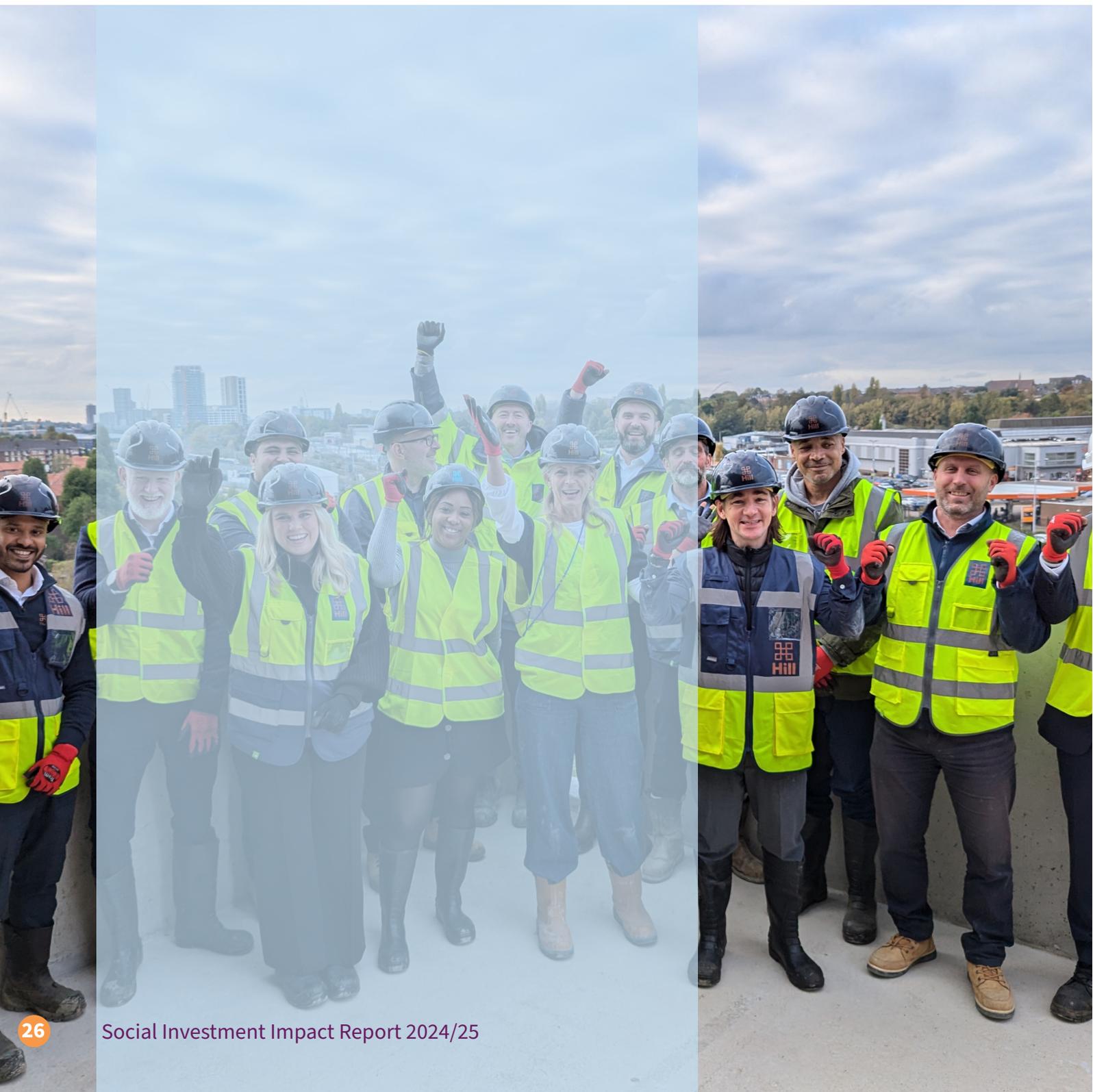
This plan underlines our determination to break the cycle of inequality and ensure that all residents can thrive, regardless of their background or where they live. The process of creating this impact report demonstrates how social investment plays a key role in supporting these aims and delivering real, lasting change.



Property and procurement are the two areas with the most opportunity for social investment in the borough. A key part of our vision moving forward is to ensure fair and equitable access to the Council's properties for voluntary and community sector organisations leasing these spaces.

At the same time, we are committed to maximising social value by driving supplier investment into the borough, ensuring that the benefits are shaped by the Council's and community's priorities, and shared widely among our residents and partners.

Looking forward, we are determined to keep learning, adapting, and working together so that Kensington and Chelsea becomes an ever greener, safer, and fairer place for everyone who calls it home.



Notes

