Compost London

Impact Report

April 2024 - December 2025



Table of Contents

1 Welcome Page

2 Who are Compost London?

3 Vision & Mission

4 Our Approach

5 Compost London Timeline

6 Capacity Building

8 Nourish Fund

Case Study: Shofa Mia

Case Study: Shirley Biro

11 Enabling

12 Training: The Numbers

13 Events

14 Commissioned Work

15 Connection & Collaboration

Evaluation Exchange

Newham Community Research Network

Research Engagement Networks (REN)

20 What We Achieved Together

Newham Community Research

Information & Collaboration

Newsletter

22 Communication & Information

25 We don't just work in Newham

26 Impact

27 Special thanks to...



Welcome!

Welcome to our very first Compost London Impact Report.

While we previously published an impact report for "**Compost Newham**"[1], this is the first time we are detailing the work and reach of **Compost London** as a whole – its growth, its impact, and the partnerships that continue to shape our journey.

I was honoured to be appointed as CEO in early 2024, joining Compost London at a pivotal moment in its development. I stepped into an organisation founded on strong values, bold thinking, and a deep commitment to supporting the voluntary and community sector – particularly within the context of **Newham's rich diversity and complexity.**

Since then, Compost London has continued to grow – not only in reach, but in purpose. We've expanded our team of Directors, welcomed new project leads, and brought on two new Associates to support our delivery. Each person brings a unique perspective, helping us stay connected to the communities we serve and grounded in local realities.

This report tells the story of what we've achieved in the year April 2024 to December 2025 – through capacity building, research, partnership work, and a strong commitment to equity and integrity. It also reflects the voices and efforts of many groups, partners, and residents who make our work possible. Their insights, needs, and strengths continue to shape everything we do.

None of this would have been possible without the trust and collaboration of our partners, funders and the groups we support. We are grateful for the ongoing investment and belief in our approach, which starts with listening, builds relationships and focuses on lasting change rather than quick fixes.



As we move into 2026, we remain committed to:



- Ensuring small organisations are prepared for and visible in local commissioning
- Strengthening the infrastructure and capacity of the VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise) sector across Newham and pan London
- Building the partnerships needed to tackle the multiple issues head-on
- To everyone who has been part of this journey with us, thank you for your time and support as we continue to grow and serve the incredible voluntary and community organisations that support our communities with their passion and vision.

Sandra White

CEO, Compost London CIC

[1] "Compost Newham" refers to the delivery of the Newham Infrastructure contract which Compost London delivered. It ran from August 2021 to March 2024. With this funding from the London Borough of Newham, we provided targeted support for Newham groups through one-on-one advice sessions, facilitating networks, helping to obtain funding, and running events and training.



Who are Compost London?



Compost London CIC is an infrastructure support organisation working across London, with a strong commitment to Newham, where we're based. We help voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) groups build the skills, confidence and connections they need to thrive.

We are a team of community development professionals who came together in 2018 out of concern for the disappearing infrastructure support across east London's voluntary and community sector.

What started quietly has become a recognised, trusted organisation—supporting emerging and developing groups to build strong roots and thrive. We specialise in capacity building, governance, bid writing, safeguarding, strategic development, and leadership support—often for those who don't usually get noticed.

We provide practical support to help organisations build strong foundations and thrive—from governance and safeguarding to bid writing, leadership development and funding strategy.

Through initiatives such as the Newham ESOL Exchange, Evaluation Exchange, Anti-Poverty Alliance, and our Nourish Fund, we bring people together, support smaller groups to grow, and create space for community-led action.

Over the past year, Compost London has continued to strengthen and resource the small and emerging voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations across Newham and North East London.

We exist to ensure that community-rooted organisations can thrive, particularly those working closest with residents facing the greatest inequalities. Our work is built on listening, walking alongside groups at their own pace, and building their confidence, skills and connections so they can deliver lasting impact.

Compost London's Vision & Mission

Vision:



We see a thriving civil society characterised by enabled voluntary and community sector organisations sharing strong connections, opportunities and information.

Mission:



We achieve this by enhancing the capabilities of voluntary and community organisations through capacity building and assisting them to create connection and great collaborations, thus generating innovative solutions that meet community needs.

This report showcases our commitment to these values across three key areas: Capacity Building & Organisational Development, Connection & Collaboration, Communication & Information Sharing. Together, these pillars reflect the breadth and depth of our work across Newham and beyond. The organisations we support are at the heart of everything we do — we value every contribution they make and hope to use the learning and tools in this report to serve the sector even more effectively in the years to come.



Since the last Compost London infrastructure report for Compost Newham (April 2024–2025), we have:

- Reinvested £10,000 of our surplus into the Nourish Fund to support groups who needed it most
- Brought ESOL providers together to make learning easier to access and more coordinated through the Newham ESOL Exchange
- Delivered targeted commissioned capacity-building for groups across London, meeting them where they are and helping them stabilise and grow
- Continued to be a trusted voice at borough and system levels, making sure the experiences and insights of small groups shape the bigger picture

Highlights at a glance



- 54 organisations received organisational development support
- 80 ESOL learners attended the Progression Routes event at the Mary Ward Centre
- 13 partners engaged – UCL ((University College London), City Bridge Trust and London Borough of Newham, NIHR, UKRI, Hubbub, UEL (University of East London), Queen Mary University, Barts Health, IGP (Institute of Global Prosperity), north east London Integrated Care Services, NEL VCFSE Collaborative and Birkbeck University.
- 55 hours of mentoring sessions delivered to leaders and trustees
- Over £1 million pounds of funding brought in to the Borough for VCFSE groups and partners

Our Approach



We know that building strong organisations is slow, steady work. Many groups come to us under pressure – short on staff time, overstretched by funding cycles and struggling to navigate statutory systems. Our approach is simple:

- Meet groups where they are – listening, not assuming
- Co-design a plan – setting clear steps that are achievable
- Walk alongside them – building skills and confidence as we go
- Step back when they're ready – leaving groups more resilient and connected

This is about delivering projects – it's about building long-term planning, increasing understanding of the sector and ensuring stability, so groups can continue supporting their communities year after year.

Compost London

TIMELINE

2018

Registered as CIC

2018

Deliver work for – including AAA, BDCA, Bridge Fund, Connect Newham, Creative Wick, Hubbub, Iroko Theatre Company, NewDay, Newham Heritage Month, Newham Nurture, Waltham Forest Community Transport, Woodford Church

2019

Nourish Fund used to support small and emerging groups

2019
2020

ESOL Exchange Heritage project

2019
2020

ESOL Exchange Single Point of Contact project

2019

Ongoing ESOL Exchange work

2020
2021

Mapping of sector activity & provision of support during Covid (led to Newham Anti-Poverty Alliance & Newham Food Alliance)

2021

Accredited as Living Wage Employer

2021
2024

LBN Infrastructure Contract: Compost Newham

2022

Newsletter and noticeboard keep sector informed and connected

2021
2022

Evaluation Exchange Programme in Newham & Camden

2021

Community Banker for People Powered Places (PPP)

2021
2022

Citizen Social Scientists Science recruited and supported

2022

community banker outside PPP

2022

Co-ordinated Newham Element of Joseph Rowntree Foundation Destitution Study

2022
2023

Co-production of health & wellbeing activity evaluation toolkit

2023
2024

Community Research Network feasibility phase 1

2023

Research Engagement Network development and implementation

2023
2024

Evaluation Exchange partner with Co-Production Collaborative in Measuring Success Programme

2024

First Chief Executive appointed

2025
Ongoing

Community Research Network implementation phase 2, REN (Research Engagement Network), ESOL Exchange, newsletter and PPP



Capacity Building & Organisational Development

Capacity building sits at the core of Compost London's work; it is the reason we exist. Over the past year, Compost London has continued to strengthen small and emerging VCFSE organisations through targeted funding, collaborative networks, and hands-on development support.

Why Capacity Building Matters

Capacity building is often invisible, but it is essential. It's the advice, coaching, training, and connections that help organisations stay compliant, attract funding, and deliver quality services. Our support to groups has been integral to their development. Here are some of the ways we create impact as we capacity build groups, large and small:

- Keeps groups steady. Governance, finance, safeguarding, data and HR – the essentials that allow groups to run well.
- Builds staying power. Coaching and mentoring turn "fire-fighting" into planning, so groups can survive short-term funding cycles.
- Improves equity. Smaller, community-rooted organisations (often closest to marginalised residents) can access funding and commissioning.
- Connects systems. Infrastructure bodies translate central Government, NHS, Integrated Care System (ICS) and council priorities into practical action and channel community insight back up the chain.

"Infrastructure organisations are the glue that holds communities together – without them, smaller groups struggle to survive and thrive."

– NAVCA, 2024



"Strong, resilient organisations deliver more for communities – leadership and infrastructure investment are delivery enablers, not overheads."

– ACEVO, 2023





Nourish Fund

When infrastructure funding isn't available, we continue to offer support through our Nourish Fund. The Nourish Fund ensures that we are able to consistently offer capacity building, across the sector. In 2024-2025 we committed £10,000 from our organisational surplus to make sure local groups can still access guidance, mentoring, and practical help, regardless of external funding.

The fund works like a bursary, covering the cost of staff time so groups can access services they might otherwise be unable to, including:

- Information, advice and guidance tailored to their needs
- Mentoring and coaching to build confidence and leadership
- Access to our networks and workshops

In 2024–25, the fund supported 10 organisations, enabling them to stabilise operations, strengthen governance and financial management, and plan strategically for the future. Over the past four years, we have worked with 23 organisations, each addressing critical local needs – including mental health and wellbeing, youth engagement through sport, land and housing development, and support for migrants and refugees.

Start-Up/Emerging Groups

We supported a number of new or emerging groups with information to help them start up effectively. This included Lemonade Days and Wellbeing East. We worked with other more established groups such as Recet UK and Breaking Barriers, to grow their confidence in decision making and provided a range of fundraising support for groups seeking to grow and develop their services.

"Working with the Nourish Fund has provided me with the reassurance I was looking for and I feel that my needs and that of the organisation, are both met and catered for."





Nourish Fund

Shofa Mia (Case Study)

Shofa Mia is the founder of Ashoka's Vision International, an organisation created because of the experience and pain in the loss of a brother. Ashoka's Vision aims to brings hope to local young people who are devoted and committed to making change in our community. They do this by:

Running a weekly market stall every Saturday in Woodgrange Market Place.

Nature and biodiversity projects

Youth engagement and volunteering opportunities

Internship placements

Creative and artistic collaborations

Youth led Mental wellbeing workshops

What they thought the organisation needed when they made contact

"With my PPP (People Powered Places) funding coming to an end, I wanted to go for further funding to ensure sustainability of the project. I am Neurodiverse and struggle with form filling and so also needed help. Also when completing a funding application form, I wanted to have someone who is non-judgemental and who I could bounce off new ideas, get reassurances etc, and who could help me by identifying other opportunities and community networks. I contacted Compost London and their

"I have found the information has been useful and now that we met it's good to bump into each other at external meetings. "

"One thing I do really appreciate is that you will always get a reply if you email or if you call. That's important to me."

"The newsletter is great and that's where I heard how I can get some help with recruiting Trustees."

"We meet whenever I am available and that has meant moving meetings around but that's not a problem – They have been flexible. So far based on their support I did get £1000 from Asda. "

"With Compost London's support, I can state that I am more confident and feel more knowledgeable than before I contacted them. I can feel the benefits and believe it has made a positive impact"

"Things have definitely changed – e.g. We were struggling to write a five-year strategy and they suggested we do a three year one instead which has proven much more manageable. Also, feeling more confident, we ran a themed event for which we are now receiving acknowledgements and funding!"

"We have seen ourselves grow from a start up in 2019, to 2021 when we became a registered charity and again more recently in Aug 2025 when we are now seen a a reputable charity doing active work and our name is being mentioned in rooms up and down Newham at strategic levels - due to the support from Compost London. "

"Meeting them has led to increased access to new opportunities – e.g. meeting senior council officers who provided further connections promoting me into new spaces. It's exciting. "

"Compost are great. They pointed me towards various funders. I received a list of funders to check out. I look forward to the meetings with Sandra, so I can ask all the questions I need as I know they will answer to the best of their ability!"



Nourish Fund

Shirley Biro (Case Study)

I have known the leaders of Compost London since before they started. I had realised as a governor of ELFT (East London NHS Foundation Trust), that the need for the voluntary sector being supported was really high and I could see that we were aligned as the Caroline Rouse and Anne Crisp and Briony Fitzgerald , all founders of Compost, also had recognised the need and the importance of proper voluntary sector support. This was not long before COVID. When COVID came it struck like a hammer, everything locked down and I connected with food banks in the area, and we started sharing things with the community. The voluntary sector had managed to organise quicker than the council.

Compost London's work has been invaluable in connecting the voluntary sector after all the ties had been lost. Supporting with funding, support and skills building has been really useful – the voluntary sector needs more.

Compost's speciality I believe is reconnecting the voluntary sector – reinvesting in the communities by bringing money in – We look forward to working with them in the future to see a more joined up approach between the council, voluntary sector and health care.

Compost provides the support missing from when the CVS was no longer around.

Compost use local people like me for updates, mapping activities and advice on what's going to happen. They work with you, and you feel part of the team.

I enjoy being joined up as a resident with someone who is interested in the voluntary sector. I have a passion for the voluntary sector and all the other people we can help but also working with groups - Compost London gives us an opportunity to do that -



Enabling

Acting as Community Banker - 2024/5

Compost acts as a community banker for projects that have been successful in the People Powered Places (PPP) and Newham Small Community Grant (NSCG) funding for residents and also for Community groups that do not have a bank account and need an organisation to hold the money on their behalf.

This service involves holding the money and working with the group to spend the money according to their grant application. In some cases, this is helping to find suppliers like insurers' that understand the voluntary or community sector, buying goods for the organisation or reimbursing money that has been spent by the project.

To support this, we also ran two sessions on safeguarding and one on bid writing.

In the last round we supported 25 projects through PPP and 15 projects through NSCG from across the borough. Thats **40** in total and just under **£200,000** in funds

They represented a diverse range of activities from opening a food bank to painting murals, and from gardening and soil improvement to tackling loneliness by getting out and about more.

Some projects have gone on to become recognised community groups or new charities and Compost's core services support them on their journey.





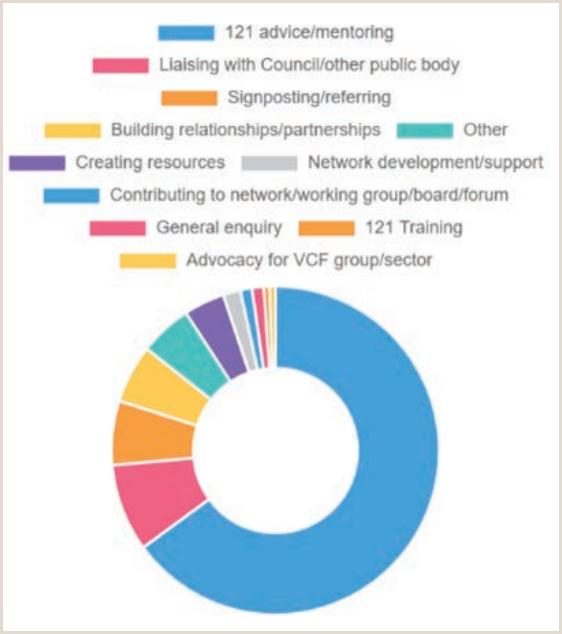


Training

The Numbers

In 2024/25, Compost London delivered **254** hours of capacity-building and organisational development support across **67** voluntary and community groups. Most support focused on the essentials that keep organisations standing up in a stiff wind: fundraising (**57** groups), governance (**30** groups), and strategy and planning (**25** groups). This was delivered mainly through 1-2-1 mentoring (including 1-2-1 in-person meetings), alongside group sessions, events and webinars. We also ran **16** events—covering everything from health inequalities and safeguarding to fundraising, peer and community research, and Theory of Change—with **200+** people registered.

By Type of Work



By Category



Events



















Commissioned Work

In 2024–25, Compost London was commissioned by several funders to deliver tailored capacity-building support to voluntary and community organisations. These partners included:

- **Bridge Fund**
- **UCL**
- **Funder Plus**
- **Hubbub**
- **Work Well**
- **Civil Society Roots 3 (funded by City Bridge Trust, the National Lottery Community Fund, and the GLA)**
- **London Borough of Newham**

Through these commissions, we supported a wide range of groups at different stages of development, including:

Lewisham Local, Treasures Foundation, AHPN (African Health & Policy Network) and Sister Circle.

We work with organisations at all stages of development, providing support shaped by their priorities and capacity:

Established Groups
Developed a fundraising business plan. **Lewisham Local** received support reviewing operational processes to prepare for service expansion.

Strategic Development
We worked with **Newham-based groups** funded through Civil Society Roots 3 to carry out light-touch strategic reviews, explore succession planning, and rethink partnership models. In one case, we supported a group in aligning their governance with delivery goals ahead of a major funding bid.



Our commissioned work starts where each group is. We listen first, co-design a plan, and walk with them as they try new approaches, strengthen systems, and build confidence.

Crucially, income from commissioned work strengthens Compost London's core offer. It enables us to reinvest in grassroots organisations through the Nourish Fund, and to offer free advice and mentoring where infrastructure support is unavailable.

Impact in Numbers (April 2024 – December 2025)

- 54 groups received capacity building support
- £10,000 reinvested into local groups via Nourish Fund
- 80 ESOL learners supported at the Progression Routes event



Connection & Collaboration

Connection and collaboration are central to how we work. We work hard to build trusted partnerships and are happy to explore new ways working in collaboration with those organisations with lived experience to bridge gaps, support communities create space for shared learning, new ideas, and joint action. The following examples illustrate this approach in practice.

Newham ESOL Exchange

The Newham ESOL Exchange is a borough-wide platform that brings together ESOL providers, teachers, and stakeholders to collaborate, share learning, and improve access to English language learning across Newham. It enables organisations of all sizes – from major institutions to grassroots groups – to connect and coordinate their efforts for the benefit of local learners.

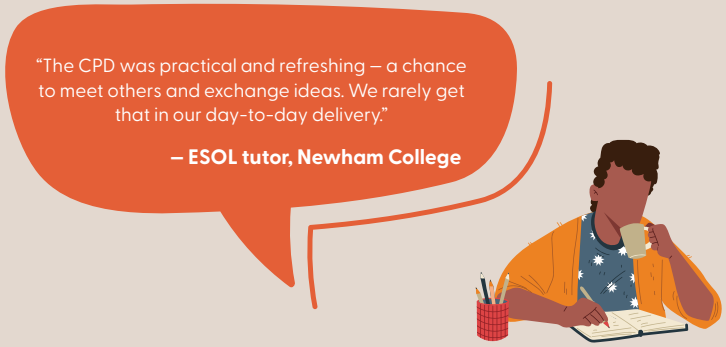
The Exchange does not deliver services directly but creates the conditions for better collaboration. The ESOL Exchange website lists up-to-date class information – including times, locations, and childcare availability, helping all learners access learning whilst reducing barriers.

In May 2024, the Exchange hosted ESOL Learners' Next Steps and Progression Routes, an event held at the Mary Ward Centre and attended by around 80 learners. The event supported learners to explore further education, employment, and volunteering options.



Newham ESOL Exchange

The Exchange has also run CPD sessions for ESOL practitioners, offering a space to share good practice, explore new approaches, and build a stronger network of professional support across the borough.



The ESOL Exchange website continues to serve as a central point of information, offering both course listings and practitioner resources.

ESOL Steering Group

The steering group is made up of a strong mix of local providers, including:

- Newham College
- ONALS (Our Newham Adult Learning Service)
- Blossom CIC
- Welcome Newham
- West Silvertown Foundation
- Birkbeck College
- Mary Ward Centre
- The Renewal Programme

Evaluation Exchange

The Evaluation Exchange is a great example of recognising the voluntary and community sector's expertise through knowledge exchange. We achieve this by creating an equal partnership, bringing together voluntary and community sector groups wanting to improve their capacity to evaluate their work, with postgraduate students and researchers who want to put their research and evaluation skills into practice in a real-life setting. The voluntary and community sector groups have skills and knowledge that they can share with the postgraduates at the same time, they are able to learn from the post graduates application of evaluation theory.

In May 2024, we delivered capacity building sessions for students as part of the Evaluation Training for Community Consultancy. These students later applied their learning by supporting the evaluation of Kentish Town Community Centre and providing insights in how to improve the centre's value to the community through their proposals to set up a childcare group. For further information check out this link Building skills and creating impact: Evaluation Training for Community Consultancy (2024)

We also worked with the Co-Production Collective on the measuring success project to encourage and guide the various research participant project from around the country to develop and use a wider range of evaluation tools. This exemplar initiative brings together a diverse group of individuals and organisations – including universities, charities, funders, NHS bodies, local authorities, housing associations, and grassroots groups – all committed to working collaboratively to co-produce meaningful change.

In partnership we designed and delivered a learning programme focussing on 'co-producing evaluations', including four online training sessions and one-to-one guidance, over the 18-month programme, supporting eight cross-sector teams from the voluntary and community sector, health and social care (including the NHS), and individuals with lived experience.

And more recently we co-authored Chapter 7 in the co-production report:

"Learning about Evaluation in Co-production", Chapter 7 in Measuring Success in Co-production: Co-production Report (2025) Shaping the Future of Evaluation in Co-production (2025) - Click the link to find out more about how co production can work to tackle contemporary issues such as challenging racism, substance misuse, mental health and homelessness.



Community Research in Practice



We have two very different – but equally powerful – approaches to community research: REN (Research Engagement Network) and the Newham Community Research Network (CRN). REN is funded by NIHR (National Institute for Health and Research) and Newham CRN is funded by UKRI (United Kingdom Research and Innovation) managed by the Young Foundation.

Research Engagement Network sits squarely within NIHR's Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) strategy.

It's a practical example of PPIE in action because:

- It actively involves people who might not normally take part in research.
- It ensures communities understand how research can affect them and their local services.
- It enables residents to help shape research priorities and approaches, not just be passive subjects.
- It focuses on inclusion and equity – a key NIHR aim – so that research benefits are shared across all communities.



Newham CRN is part of a network of networks that:

Newham CRN on the other hand, is rooted in deep participation and local ownership. One of 9 nationally placed networks that have responded to UKRI's 5 year investment in communities, so they can lead, direct and contribute to research that matters to them.

- focuses on equipping residents with the skills to lead their own research – from defining the issue, designing the questions, gathering evidence, and presenting findings.
- It's about building confidence and capability, giving communities the tools to understand their own realities and influence change on their own terms.
- Questions of who owns, directs and benefits from research and innovation are not straightforward – the power dynamics at play are significant.

Both approaches are grounded in the specific context of local communities, and both reflect the value of doing research with people, not on them.

Research Engagement Network (REN) – North East London

Compost London is the Newham lead on REN. This year, our focus with REN has been on increasing awareness and participation in health and social care research among people from the global majority. We have concentrated on sharing information about current research opportunities and encouraging individuals to sign up if they are interested. At this stage, our role ends once people have been connected to the research; we do not track their involvement or outcomes. We are not yet influencing what research is undertaken, our work is opening the door for communities who have historically been underrepresented, thus laying the groundwork for deeper engagement in the future.

A Shared Purpose

REN is built on the principle that health research should be more accessible by those with lived experience of inequality. Our role is to bring stakeholders together – from grassroots groups to NHS partners – to engage with and share research opportunities ensuring that health and social care research is more inclusive, ethical and impactful.

Through REN, we support north east London's Integrated Care System (ICS) to:

- Build trust and meaningful relationships between communities and researchers
- Open up pathways for local people to participate in and influence research
- Create the conditions for long-term, sustainable research engagement
- Centre community priorities and insight within health and social care transformation
- While also helping academic and health partners understand how to work more effectively with communities.

Locally Rooted, System Aligned

Our partnerships span the ICS, NHS providers, universities, public health bodies and community groups – allowing us to act as a trusted facilitator bringing sectors together.



Over the last year, the Research Engagement Network (REN) in orth East London has begun to demonstrate the power of community-rooted collaboration in action.

What we Achieved together:



5 Community Events held across Northeast London, each co-designed with local partners to ensure relevance, cultural sensitivity, and accessibility.



300+ Residents attended these events – many of whom had not previously engaged with research.





link to film: https://youtu.be/rjmoF9XPteE

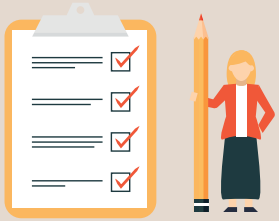
Co-produced Maternity Research Film – Developed to increase engagement and participation among marginalised and BAME communities. The film reflects a collaborative effort with community members and researchers. (We are currently liaising with NIHR to gather data on reach and engagement.)



Insights Reflecting Over 1,000 Voices from across the Northeast London "Big Conversation" – a major regional listening campaign that further strengthens REN's evidence base.



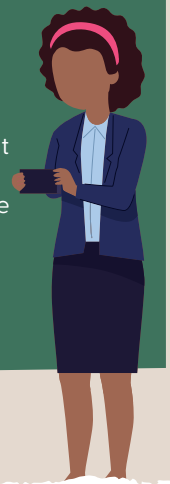
Sickle Cell Community Event led by Harmony – focused on raising awareness, tackling stigma, and improving engagement in future research.



433 Survey respondents offered valuable insight into public understanding, trust, and barriers to research participation.

"Working with Compost London over this past year has been enriching on so many levels. Together we have worked to build a network of Research Champions - local individuals, from diverse backgrounds - who have pledged their ongoing support to raise awareness of health and care research in our communities and ensure that patients and communities insights and experiences are informing our work, from conception to implementation. The Compost team's indefatigable energy and commitment to reducing health inequalities has been key to our success. From sharing community insights to practical support in event planning and so much more in between; their collective knowledge, skills and experience has been invaluable in bringing about the change we want to see."

(Neeta Patel, Associate Director, Research Engagement, Barts Health Research)



Newham Community Research Network: Phase 1

The journey of the Newham CRN began with the Expression of Interest phase, where Compost London was selected as one of 24 networks across the UK. With over £40,000 in funding, Phase One focused on laying the groundwork for a community-driven research network.

This phase included:

- **Recruiting Lead Organisations** to guide the network's direction.
- **Setting Clear objectives** to ensure alignment with community priorities.
- **Engaging the Voluntary Sector** to build awareness and support.

Key Insight from Phase One:

After meeting with twelve groups across Newham, it became clear that communities are ready and eager to take ownership of research directly affecting their lives. However, achieving this requires a shift in power dynamics - from communities being passive subjects of external research to becoming active leaders in the research process.



CRN Video Introduction video

Scaling up: A £1M Cluster Grant for Phase Two

Building on the success of Phase One, Compost London secured a £1 million cluster grant over five years, making Newham CRN one of only nine projects nationwide to receive this funding. Phase Two focuses on scaling up the initiative and empowering marginalised communities to lead in shaping their future.

Key Goals for Phase Two

- **Expanding Networks:** Strengthening partnerships with community and voluntary organisations.
- **Training Citizen Social Scientists:** Equipping community members with lived experience to lead research.
- **Sustainability:** Developing a lasting framework that ensures the research network thrives long-term.

Connect with us

Calling all community organisations, researchers, and individuals who share our vision of a more inclusive, collaborative research process.

Whether you're a potential partner, a researcher, or simply passionate about driving social impact, we'd love to hear from you. Let's collaborate to build a stronger, more inclusive future.

https://www.compostlondon.org.uk/projects/ukri-community-research-networks





Communication and Information

At Compost London, we believe that strong communication is the foundation of meaningful collaboration. Over the past year, we've worked hard to connect, inform, and amplify the work of grassroots and community-led organisations across Northeast London – with a particular focus on the extraordinary depth and breadth of work happening in Newham. From launching the Compost London and REN newsletters to introducing our digital Noticeboard and updating our website, we've created platforms that promote knowledge-sharing and build trust across the VCFSE sector.



We deeply value all contributions to these spaces and recognise how vital local groups are – not just as partners in delivery but as the heart and soul of the work.

Compost London sits on the following boards to ensure we are able to gather useful data, information and opportunities to share relevant back to the sector. Next year we want to improve our feedback routes to the sector and improve ways of getting information to the organisations.

The groups we are part of include: London Communities Emergency Partnership, London Plus, London CVS, NAVCA, Newham Funder's Forum, UCL East Community Board, Staywell, Newham Diverse Community Health and Care Forum and NEL VCFSE Collaborative Communities, London Prosperity Board - to name a few.



We also feature a Sector Spotlight, giving local VCFSE groups a chance to showcase the work they're doing in the community and connect with a wider audience. If you wish to be spotlighted let us know here.

The newsletter consistently achieves an open rate of over 50%, reflecting its value as a trusted and useful resource for grassroots organisations, funders, and system partners.

"The Compost London newsletter is always such a valuable read. It manages to share sector news, opportunities, and insights all in one, and in a way that is practical and connected. There's a thoughtful balance of information and reflection, making it a great resource for anyone working in or alongside the VCF sector."

Rozina Iqbal, Newham Community Project, Director of Operations.



Compost London Noticeboard & Newsletter

The Compost London Noticeboard is updated regularly with news and activities relevant to Newham including news 'for and from the sector', 'Funding News', 'news from the Council', "Jobs, Volunteer and Training Opportunities" and "What's happening in Newham".



Our monthly Compost London Newsletter is sent out during the third week of each month to over **650** recipients across the sector.

- **Funding Updates**
- **What's Going on in Newham**
- **Training Opportunities**
- **Resources & Policy**
- **Employment Opportunities**

If you wish to receive our newsletter sign up here.

REN Newsletter

REN Newsletter launched in March 2025, alongside an associated noticeboard – providing regular updates, spotlighting community voices, and sharing opportunities to participate in research. Thus, establishing a strong communications channel directly between researchers and the community.

Newsletter Developed first Circulated at the end of March

The first edition of the REN (Research Engagement Network), newsletter was developed and circulated at the end of March 2025 and has been available monthly since then. The newsletter is designed to keep stakeholders informed and engaged in our work, partnerships, and learning across the network.

If you wish to share any items events Email us here



222 recipients

We will use these insights to strengthen content, improve reach, and increase engagement in future issues.

We don't just work in Newham...

Although Compost London is based in Newham, we don't just work here. We support voluntary and community groups across London and beyond, helping them build skills, share knowledge, and connect with others. Our reach is wider because organisations like Funder Plus and Hubbub and the GLA have recognised us as effective partners in supporting local groups.

Barking and Dagenham

Bloomsbury (Westminster)

Highgate

K&C

Brent

H&F

Hounslow

Hillingdon

Harrow

Newham

Camden

Tower Hamlets

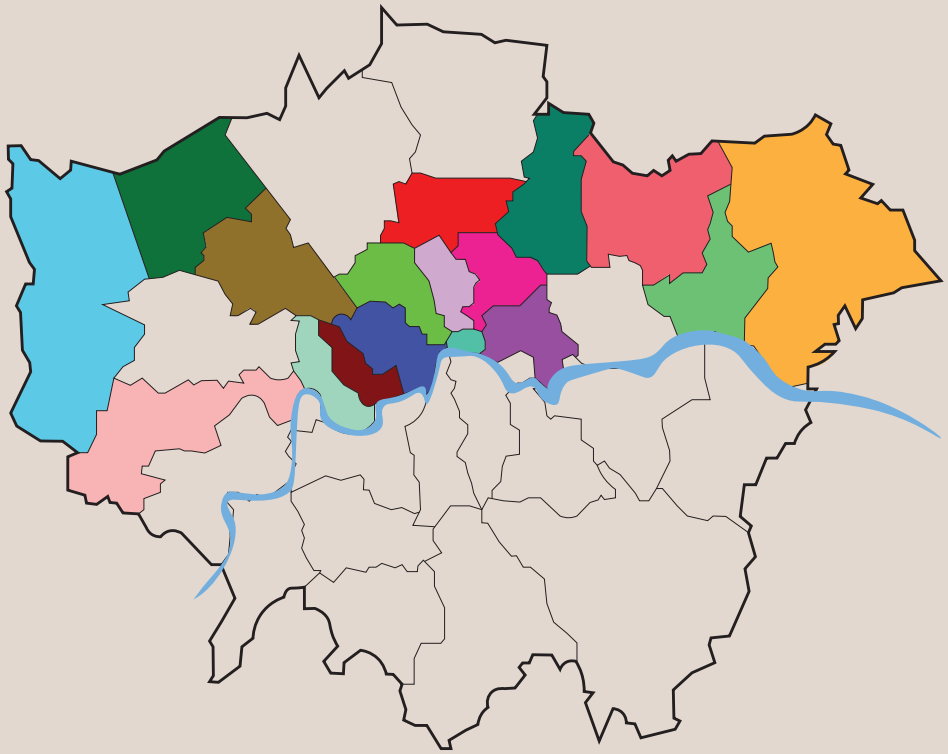
Waltham Forest

Hackney

Redbridge

Havering

City of London



Impact

Compost London's support helped local voluntary and community groups move from "getting by" to being more likely to thrive. Through 1-2-1 mentoring, events and webinars, groups strengthened the foundations that allow organisations to grow: clearer strategy, stronger governance, and improved fundraising confidence. This has a practical ripple effect—groups become more stable, more credible, and better able to plan their next steps, retain people, and deliver consistent support to their communities.

Just as importantly, our work increases connection. We have brought groups into relationship with each other, with local decision-makers, attracting resources inside and outside the borough. The voluntary sector is less isolated and more able to access opportunities, partnerships and specialist support even at this difficult time as mentioned in the NEL VCFSE Collaborative State of the Sector report. Through programmes such as REN and Newham CRN, we have also helped connect communities to significant new investment, just over £1 million pounds for marginalised groups over 5 years, strengthening local anchor organisations and widening access to resources.

This impact is especially clear in our work with migrant and refugee residents. ESOL Exchange focused on learners' progression thus supporting people to build confidence, skills and routes into wider community life. Newham CRN has brought hope as well as practical access to new skills, networks and opportunities, helping residents see that their lived experience matters and that they can shape what happens in their borough. The overall change is stronger more connected organisations, who in turn can better support their communities and more residents to step into opportunity rather than being locked out of it.





From all of us at Compost London we'd like to thank you all!



Special thanks to:

navca
COMMUNITY FUND
The Young Foundation
UK Research and Innovation
North East London Health & Care Partnership
NHS Barts Health NHS Trust
NEWHAM COMMUNITY PROJECT
NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research
The 5e
VCFSE Collaborative
ELBWO
Newham London
Institute for Global Prosperity

Be sure to follow us