

2026
Impact Report

Reflecting on how we've supported our community over the past year.

Registered Charity No. 200424

Welcome to our 2026 Impact Report

This year has been one of the most significant in Wimbledon Guild's recent history, with the major refurbishment of Guild House getting underway. During the work we have remained focused on what matters most: making sure that no one in Merton has to face life's challenges alone.

Making sure that our vital support services continued during the renovation work was a top priority. I am delighted that we have been able to provide our services uninterrupted from alternative venues throughout the refurbishment.

Together, we supported more than 3,000 people across Merton and reached more people in communities that often face barriers to accessing support.

However, the needs of our community keep growing. Rising living costs continue to place significant pressure on local people, increasing demand for support with financial hardship, loneliness and mental health. Across all our services, the number of people seeking our help remains well above pre-pandemic levels, reflecting the challenges many local people continue to face.

As I prepare to retire at the end of 2026, this is my final Impact Report as Chief Executive. It has been an immense privilege to lead Wimbledon Guild and work alongside such dedicated staff, volunteers, trustees and supporters.

Together, we have built a local charity that is responsive, resilient and deeply rooted in our community.

Thank you for making this work possible.



Wendy Pridmore
Chief Executive



Wimbledon Guild at a Glance

3,000+
people supported

£203k
distributed in welfare grants

1,156
Community Hub enquiries

3,369
hours of Talking Therapies delivered

936
people attended an activity

6,446
HomeFood Café meals served

280
volunteers supported our work

97
befriending volunteers supported 148 local people

Understanding Merton: A Borough of Two Halves

Merton is a borough of contrasting communities. While the west of the borough tends to be older and more affluent, the east has a younger, more ethnically diverse population and higher levels of financial hardship.

Our services are shaped around the needs of local people across the borough.

We provide opportunities for older people to remain active, connected and independent, while also delivering specialist support for people facing poverty, poor mental health and other life challenges.

By working across the whole borough, we make sure support reaches the people who need it most.

How We Achieve Our Aims

1. Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation

Loneliness has a serious impact on both mental and physical health, especially for older people.

This year we helped people reconnect with their community and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Our Impact

- **HomeFood Café:** Despite relocating to a temporary venue during the Guild House refurbishment, the café remained a vital social hub, serving 6,446 delicious meals and offering a friendly, inclusive space to connect over affordable meals.
- **Befriending Service:** During the year we supported 148 clients through matches with 97 trained volunteers, who provided regular companionship and support. We were delighted that our Befriending team achieved the highest possible rating, Excellence, in the Quality in Befriending Award. Achieving this level of accreditation on our first submission is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers and staff.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** More than 280 volunteers supported Wimbledon Guild this year, double the number from the previous year. They contributed across a range of services including the HomeFood Café, Befriending Service, Activities and our Community Garden and we're so grateful for their support – we couldn't do it without them.

To celebrate the remarkable contribution volunteers make to Wimbledon Guild, this year we launched our Volunteer Long Service Awards, recognising commitments from one year through to 25 years of service.



> "Thank you for all the kindness you showed my Dad after Mum passed away. We have visited the café and everyone was so welcoming. Thank you for being so caring and providing such a great service to the community.



Two volunteers receiving their awards



Achieving Excellence in Befriending Accreditation



Putting people at the heart of our support, every step of the way

2. Supporting People Facing Difficulties in Life

We know that money worries, poor mental health and practical difficulties rarely happen in isolation. By taking the time to understand each person's circumstances, we can provide the right support when it's needed and help people build a more secure future.

Our Impact

- **Talking Therapies:** We made the service more accessible, particularly for people who are less likely to seek mental health support. More people from ethnically diverse communities, disabled people and LGBTQ+ people accessed the service, and we delivered 3,369 hours of Talking Therapies.
- **Wellbeing Support:** 426 clients received short-term or ongoing help, with a focus on helping people maximise their income and manage complex mental health needs. The team also delivered Merton Uplift, offering one-to-one sessions and workshops for those with mild to moderate mental health conditions.
- **Continuous Support:** 159 vulnerable older adults facing long-term challenges received intensive, ongoing support with regular visits from our team.

> "A huge thank you for all the wonderful things you have done for me over the truly difficult period since my darling husband passed away. You have enabled me to feel secure and independent.

- **Community Hub:** In partnership with Age UK, the Hub handled 1,156 calls – most related to living costs, requests for emergency food and help with essential expenses.
- **Welfare Grants:** We distributed more than £203,000 in welfare grants to 457 local people, helping families and individuals afford essentials such as beds, cookers, fridges and school uniforms.

> "This support means so much to me and will make such a huge difference as I settle into my first home after experiencing homelessness.

3. Supporting Older People to Live Full, Active and Healthy Lives

Helping older people stay active, independent and connected is at the heart of everything we do. Through a wide range of social and exercise activities, we help people build confidence, maintain their independence and live well for longer.

Our Impact

936 people participated in one of our activities last year. During the Guild House refurbishment, we delivered activities from eight locations across the borough.

We responded to growing demand by introducing new activities including Pilates, mat-based yoga, standing tai chi, table tennis and conversational Italian.

Demand for specialist programmes, including our stroke exercise and social group and Dancing with Parkinson's, continues to grow.

All activities are designed for people aged 50 and over and delivered by specialist instructors. They go beyond physical exercise to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and help older people remain active and connected within their communities.

> "My Dad had a stroke 18 months ago. When we first met you, we didn't even know what Attendance Allowance was. He's now received the taxi card and Attendance Allowance and has started attending the exercise after stroke class. He looks forward to it every week.



Our weekly Dancing with Parkinson's class



Building for the future at Guild House

Investing in Our Future

Refurbishing Guild House

This year, we started an exciting refurbishment of Guild House, marking a significant investment in both our future and the community we support.

The refurbishment was funded through the sale of Drake House, alongside financial reserves we've carefully built up over many years.

Problems including the lack of a lift, frequent burst pipes, flooding and broken windows meant our previous building was no longer fit for purpose and refurbishment was essential for us to keep providing our services.

Although staff temporarily moved to different locations, our services continued uninterrupted from alternative venues throughout the refurbishment.

The refurbished building will allow us to improve accessibility and create a welcoming space where local people can access support, friendship and community for decades to come.

Managing Our Finances

Like many charities, we're operating in a challenging economic environment, with rising costs and continued pressure on funding.

However, careful financial planning has enabled us to invest in Guild House while continuing to meet growing levels of demand.

Total income
£2,165,701

Total expenditure
£3,305,151



88p
of every £1
goes directly towards helping people in Merton.

Looking Ahead

Demand for our services shows no sign of slowing. Rising living costs, complex mental health needs and increasing social isolation continue to affect people across the borough.

As we open the doors of our newly refurbished Guild House, we are committed to expanding our reach, strengthening partnerships and making sure that support is available to everyone who needs it.

With the support of our donors, funders, volunteers and community partners, we will continue working towards our vision to make Wimbledon Guild:

A place where no one in Merton has to face life's challenges alone.



A stroke exercise class at WG Morden