

PLIAS RESETTLEMENT



ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT NO. 017



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PLIAS Resettlement Ltd. is a registered charity no. 1119468 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England no. 5644439



Our **Vision** is to make a positive difference in the lives of adults and young people who are, or at risk of becoming, perpetrators and victims of crime. Through supporting them to access Education, Training, Employment, and other support consistent with their needs, we will reduce the risks of re-offending and future victimisation. By continued learning and effective partnership working we will adapt our service delivery to meet the needs of clients we engage with in different geographical locations

Our **Mission** is to support offenders, ex-offenders, victims and people at risk of offending and victimisation thereby improving their life chances and future prospects.

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWARD



David Truswell, B.Sc., M.Sc.,
(Econ.) MBA

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Yet another challenging year for PLIAS yet we have nevertheless managed to weather the storms (and heatwaves!) with great resilience. The staff as always continue to do a magnificent job despite this year faced with yet another office move! Also, a very trying time this year for both directors with a great deal to work through in this period and important lessons for us all to learn including some important reflection on the way we work at the Board level.

With support from the Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) Resilience Fund we engaged Atkinson HR Consulting to work on the HR Strategy which included a Staff Survey, Focus Groups, and individual interviews with members of the management team and the Chair. We are implementing the results of that work to include arrangements for regular HR advisory support through a contracting arrangement and ongoing review of the organisation structure and roles. This includes the previously mentioned re-examination of how we work at board level and recruiting further talent into the board to extend its skill and experience base. Our previous strategic goal of extending our service into Luton has been placed on hold subject to an internal review of funding sources.

There have been management challenges during the year that have tested our resources and meant the executive focus has been on preserving continuity of existing commitments. These include the delivery of the National Careers Contract, Mentoring Project and Youth Services. Nevertheless, we were still able to secure funding to deliver two mental health support projects for young people.

With Councillor Orleen Hylton choosing PLIAS as the Mayor's Charity for Brent in the coming year this will be an important opportunity for raising the profile of PLIAS. This coincides with funding support to work with the Black Church Domestic Abuse Forum on raising awareness about domestic abuse and success with the Phoenix PACT project on domestic abuse to create a significant opportunity to extend our role in this work. This is an area we will develop further.

Overall, another tough year in which the organisation has risen well to the challenges, with an eye on further changes on the horizon in the years to come.

David Truswell
Chair, PLIAS Resettlement

MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

We are once again delighted to present the PLIAS Resettlement Annual report for the year ended 31 December 2022. As we reflect, we recall recognising in our 2021 Annual Report the severe and profound impact of COVID-19 and the challenges this caused in the voluntary sector, the customers we support and wider society. At the turn of 2022 as we were just beginning to return to some sort of normality, the world lurched into a new challenge as Russia invaded Ukraine. Though miles away, the ripples of this contemptable decision have and continue to be felt by people who walk the streets of Brent, frequent shops in Harlesden and queue for buses on Willesden High Road. Higher energy prices and rising inflation contributed to the birth of the “Cost of Living Crisis”, setting the unsettling scene for what would contribute to defining a year of great challenge and struggle. While we pause to consider the extensive loss of life in Ukraine and other conflicts across the world, we are all too readily reminded of the impact of decisions made far away on local people who are very close to home as the next customer walks through the door to access our support. This is anything but from Russia with Love.

It is within this context and in the middle of such challenge and gloom, PLIAS Resettlement has continued to engage, support and assist members of the community who continue to find themselves at the sharp edge of political decision and the thin end of the support wedge. Over the year 2022 we have supported over 1800 people who have come to us from various walks of life including: adults, both men women, who have either recently been released from prison or have historic offences; young offenders and young people at risk of offending; women experiencing or fleeing domestic violence; and young girls at risk of harmful practices. We have continued to support people into training and employment outcomes as well support people to escape violence and abuse and lead safe and fulfilled lives. We have delivered the Health Educators Project engaging with members of the community, especially from African and Caribbean communities, to raise awareness of health related issues and thereby reduce health inequality. We have continued to provide food vouchers to our customers along with gas and electric top up vouchers, phone top-ups and support with school uniforms. This has demonstrated our commitment to providing real help to people at the point of their need and helping them address issues which left supported will lead to much bigger problems.

Organisationally we have strengthened our resilience by developing and implementing a Human Resource strategy, strengthened our Information Technology infrastructure and thus achieving Cyber Essentials Plus re-accreditation. During the year we also underwent a MATRIX re-accreditation assessment and successfully retained this quality mark. In addition to this, we moved from West World to Unimix House in Park Royal. The new venue continues to offer a neutral space for our customers to receive the help that they need in order to progress.

We have continued to build on existing partnerships and have worked with a number of organisations including but not limited to The Shaw Trust, John Lyons Charity, Lloyds Bank Foundation Youth Futures Foundation, Asian Women’s Resource Centre, The Pilgrim Trust, The London Community Foundation, Charities Aid Foundation, Clinks, Sufra, Action West London,

Access UK, Making the Leap, Connect Stars, Jobcentre Plus, Brent Council, Trust for London, Young Brent Foundation, Social Services, Brent Probation, MET Police, LTEN, Greater London Authority (GLA), SAFFI and Brent Mencap.

We acknowledge the passing of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022, we recognise her dedication that spanned over 60 years of public service. Queen Elizabeth II was a patron to over 600 charities and while we weren't privileged to be one of them, we recognise and pay homage to her life and legacy.

It has long been our experience that pots of funding are ever decreasing while the need for services continues to surge in the opposite direction. One of the challenges faced by organisations in the voluntary sector is the creation of often unnatural competitors, organisations that are set up to address different causes, aims and customer groups all pitted against one another and vying for the same limited resources. We expect this to continue, and while we remain up for the challenge, we recognise the need to develop strategies that enable the organisation to increase its earned income. We are looking to build on our experience of delivering payment by results contracts to increase this type of funding by monetising specific services that we currently deliver for other members of the public.

Michael J Fox once remarked, "with gratitude, optimism becomes sustainable". We are determined to look into the face of expected challenges in 2023 with gratitude for how far we come. We are grateful for what we have achieved to date and the miles of the journey already completed and draw from this a sustainable optimism that one way or another, we will continue to forge ahead.

We would like to place on record our thanks and appreciation to the many funders and stakeholders who have contributed in some way to help us achieve our aims and objectives. Because of you we have been able to engage and support young people who had lost their way, finding themselves in the space of both potential victim and perpetrator of crime. Because of you we have been able to engage and support women and girls to escape the clutches of violent and toxic relationships that were characterised by abuse and manipulation. It is because of you that we have been able to engage and support adult ex-offenders who often presented with multiple barriers and needs and questioned if they were deserving of a second chance. On behalf of every customer we have supported throughout 2022, we say thank you.

Lastly but by absolutely no means least, we offer our heartfelt thanks to our trustees, staff, volunteers, and supporters. PLIAS Resettlement does a good job because you all do a good job, PLIAS Resettlement is committed to continually improving because you are committed to continual improvement, PLIAS Resettlement is considered a caring and compassionate organisation because you are caring and compassionate, every person who works for and with PLIAS Resettlement represents the face of the organisation and transmits the same heart and passion that was in the founding members hearts all those years ago. Together we will face up to any challenges that 2023 has in store, we will remain steadfastly rooted in our drive to see each customer that walks through our door improve their life and live out their potential. Ready, steady, let's get to it.

Tom Chandler & Norma Hoyte

CONSTRUCTION HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING

Health and Safety in a Construction Environment Level 1 and CITB Training - 2022

At PLIAS, the CSCS Training has been a great opportunity for customers starting a career in construction. The CSCS training has been running throughout 2022 certifying candidates with the Green Labouring Card, which enables individuals to work on a construction site. The green labouring card is obtained through completion of our intensive one-day course during which candidates complete both CITB and Level 1 in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment exam. In addition to allowing our service users to start working in a construction site, the card opens many other opportunities service users wish to explore such as apprenticeships, enhancing skills and career progression as London has a constant demand for labourers.

The CSCS training has been running throughout 2022. At the beginning of the year, we continued to hold one training session each week with a maximum of 4 candidates but managed to increase the number of candidates per session in June 2022 to maximum of 5 candidates per session and then by the end of the year sessions increased up to maximum of 8 per session. We were able to return to business as usual over the course of the year as the restrictions on social distancing were eased.

A total of 170 service users attended the Health & Safety training in 2022, which is an increase on the 2021 figures where 103 service users had attended. The increase is a result of promoting the CSCS training across job centres, probation services and jobs fairs. In addition, we have also been engaging with previous partnerships and attracting new agencies.

As well as increased attendance the pass rates have increased for Health & Safety with a pass rate of 98%. The Pass Rate for CITB was 66%. The CITB exam is still considered to be the harder exam of the two, so we have been encouraging onsite exam practise as we prepared service users. We offered support for multiple languages to tackle any barriers and also provided learners with additional one to one support where necessary.

After completing and achieving the qualifications for the CSCS cards, we have been referring service users to start work through the good working relationships PLIAS has with Construction and Recruitment agencies.

NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

We are delighted to say that we continued to deliver the National Careers Service throughout 2022. The contract was retendered by the Department of Education during the year and The Shaw Trust, an organisation with whom we have worked for many years including under Prospects, secured the contract and retained PLIAS Resettlement has a member of their supply chain. This is a high-volume contract that provides careers information, advice and guidance to all adults aged 18 years and over. We deliver the contract specifically for people with criminal records ensuring they are equipped with the most accurate and up to date information that will help them maximise the chances of securing training and employment. This includes but is not limited to helping them set short-, medium- and long-term goals, understand the timeframe for when their sentence becomes spent and how best to disclose a criminal record that accepts personal responsibility and focuses on the benefits of employing them. We deliver this through internal members of staff and external consultants who buy into our organisational culture, aims and objectives and deliver across London.

Our National Careers Service performance aim throughout 2022 was to get back to pre-pandemic levels. While this was always going to be a challenge, we made significant strides towards this and finished the year having engaged and supported 1343 people, on average just under 112 new customers every month. We supported 42% into training and employment outcomes which was a massive achievement considering the barriers that the customers who were referred to us, presented with.

The main referral sources for this project include Jobcentre Plus, Probation, and other training providers. We have established relationships with these partners who recognise the importance of the careers information, advice and guidance for customers who walk through their doors who have been in contact with the criminal justice system.

POSITIVE TURN-AROUND & MOVING ON UP

Positive Turn-Around

Building on what was achieved in 2021, we continued to deliver the Positive Turn-Around project as a partner of London Training & Employment Network (LTEN). This project is a GLA funded payment by result project that aims to engage and support ex-offenders who have completed all license conditions into training and sustainable employment. The project delivery partners comprise organisations who we have or currently work with on other projects and with whom we have established relationships of trust and support.

The project supported over 130 people over the course of the year and moved over 25% into training and employment outcomes. The feedback that we have received from our customers that we have placed onto the project has been extremely positive, thus demonstrating our positive impact on people's lives. We continue to deliver this project and look forward to achieving more outcomes in 2023.

Moving On Up

Throughout 2022 we have continued to deliver the Moving on Up project in the London borough of Brent. This project aims to improve the employment outcomes of young black men aged 16-25 and contribute to a solution to address the following problem in our community:

- young black men in London are up to 3 times more likely to be unemployed as young white men.
- unemployment rate rose by 50% for BME workers aged 16-24 during Covid soaring from 18.2% to 27.3% between the final quarter of 2019
- unemployment among young black graduates had risen to 34% by the end of 2021 – up from 22% before the pandemic
- according to the Youth Futures Foundation's 2022 survey of 2,296 ethnic minority young people, many young people (44% of young Asian people, and 57% of young Black people) see their ethnicity as a barrier to career success.

Working with consortium partners including Action West London, Making the Leap, Access UK and Connect Stars, we have continued to engage and support young black men who for various reasons struggle to access jobs in the first place and progress in their chosen career field. Throughout the year the project has been funded by Trust for London and Brent Council through the NCIL funding and is supported by Action for Race Equality (ARE). While the Moving on Up project is designed to meet the needs of young black men in general, our specific focus was on young black men who have gone through the criminal justice system. Young black men are overrepresented at all stages of the criminal justice system and therefore we added value to the Moving on Up project by using our expertise to engage and support this customer group.

POSITIVE TURNAROUND & MOVING ON UP

As well as directly engaging and supporting young black men, we have also continued to develop and deliver a sector specific mentoring programme that connects volunteers who have established careers with young black men who want to get into those same areas of work. The three main sectors we have targeted includes construction, finance and technology though we have also recruited subject specific mentors to help assist mentees with issues such as debt and finance, legal, housing and accommodation.

Both support elements of the project have delivered outcomes for young black men including increased confidence, self-esteem, improved employability, improved career progression, and delivered over 40% of 454 young black men into employment that were at London Living Wage with clear progression routes.

Moving on Up is designed to help young black men access “Quality” jobs. While the definition of a quality job will invariably differ from one person to the next, we adopted a definition that includes London Living Wage and jobs that offered a progression route. This is a definition that we are applying across all of our projects.

POSITIVE TURNAROUND PROJECT CASE STUDY

L was referred to us by a works coach, he was seeking employment. We initially started talking about employment opportunities and it slowly started to transpire that this young man had additional support needs beyond employment.

As I began to built rapport with L, I was able to ask him questions about his current situation. He was homeless, sleeping on a mattress in an alleyway, he would often go days without eating and felt extremely vulnerable as some of the local residents were bullying him. After buying him a meal he and I went on to start work on his action plan. During our discussion I contacted a local charity with a special interest in Somalia who would be able to assess him for temporary accommodation with a Somalian family. L agreed to this and felt reassured that he was getting the right help, he was eventually housed on a more permanent basis in supported accommodation.

I met up with L a few weeks later to talk about Education, Training and Employment, once he had settled into his accommodation. L wanted to work in security, so I helped him to source a course online. I also completed an application to help L get a laptop, which the council provided him to complete the course. L completed and passed the SIA course.

PLIAS supported L to secure employment working from home with the laptop he was given. When we checked in with L 13 weeks later, he was still working, he was settled and was pleased to be able to send money to Somalia to support his mother.

ETE22 & PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

ETE22

At the end of 2021, the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) awarded funding to PLIAS Resettlement to support to two key areas:

- 1) Direct delivery of support for ex-offenders
- 2) Strengthening organisational resilience

Direct Delivery

This project enabled us to provide a tailored and personalised employability support programme for people aged 16-35 who either had a criminal record or were at risk of offending. The support comprised a blend of one to one casework and mentor support that focused on helping the project customers to achieve education, training and employment outcomes. The project built on existing employer contacts in order to facilitate clear pathways into employment often via training that we delivered internally.

During this project we were able to reach, engage and support more people than we had originally intended. The project has delivered the following:

- * 89 people were engaged against a target of 60
- * 71 personalised and accredited career, information and advice sessions were delivered against a target of 60
- * 61 people received employability support and all reported increased levels of confidence
- * 32 people completed an accredited course and 23 accessed employment with 16 sustaining employment.

The difference in the lives of the individual project beneficiaries include:

- * improved confidence
- * Increased skills and employability prospects
- * increased income and financial stability

Strengthening organisational resilience

As part of the project and in line with its overarching aims, we successfully developed and implemented a Human Resource Strategy across the organisation. The resilience grant provided funding to pay for an external Human Resource Specialist consultant and also senior management time to oversee the delivery of the project and implementation of the strategy. This project involved all members of the organisation being interviewed including Trustees, Directors and Staff which ensured all voices were considered and heard when the strategy was produced. This project also bolstered the Information Technology and cyber resilience of the organisation leading to Cyber Essentials Plus re-accreditation and the implementation of a mobile device management system.

ETE & PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The resilience support grant has made the following difference in PLIAS Resettlement:

- * improved human resource management including policies, contracts and processes
- * improved efficiency of human resource management processes
- * increased voice of staff with the organisations decision making process
- * improved transparency of organisational decision making
- * improved staff pay and rewards
- * improved cyber resilience including securing Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation
- * reduced risk and impact of cyber-attacks and reduce cyber vulnerabilities

Pathways to Economic Opportunities

Funded by the London Community Foundation, this project aims to support adults aged 18-65 in Brent who either have a criminal record or are at risk of offending to support their resettlement and reduce the risks associated with reoffending. The project aims to increase the engagement of black and minority ethnic customers by establishing multiple points of entry for the timely provision of 1:1/group case work. The project provides wraparound support via personalised casework and dedicated mentor engagement to help participants move into education, training and employment and signpost/refer them to appropriate community services and specialist agencies. The project delivered 1:1/group education, training, and employment IAG/support to adults with criminal convictions or who are at risk of (re)offending. The project supported clients in areas of assessment, action plan development, group facilitation, 1:1 job brokerage and case management. The project to the organisation's primary aim and objective of reducing the risks associated with re-offending and supporting reintegration and resettlement into the community. This project is on-going and we look forward to reporting the positive impact in future years.

During 2022 we benefitted from a number of capacity building workshops that Action for Race Equality (ARE) delivered as part of the project and look forward to attending more of these in 2023.

Track Academy

During the summer of 2022, we received funding from Track academy to deliver a number of programmes that engaged young people in physical exercise. We engaged with local providers and delivered a number of sessions across the borough of Brent that included football, boxing and personal training. These sessions complimented the work of all the projects and added great value to our core work.

YOUTH SERVICES CASE STUDY

For the purpose of this case study, I will refer to this client as Y.

Y was referred to PLIAS Resettlement from one of the local job centres on 20 July 2022. Y was very frustrated with the fact that he has a degree and had studied hard to get his qualifications yet he was the only one within his household that was unemployed. He was honest about how he was feeling.

Y was signed on to the Moving on up project which aims to get young black men between the ages of 16 -24 years into employment. We spoke about the purpose of the project, and he was keen to sign up so we looked at his interests, skills, and types of jobs he would like to do. We looked at behavioural assistant roles within a school setting since Y assisted with caring for his nephew with special needs and had applied for several positions. We agreed for Y to come in and do job searches at our offices.

It became apparent that despite attending several interviews Y needed further support with interview skills and confidence building because his frustrations were misunderstood for aggression when he became anxious, and led to his getting jobs and losing them before he had even started. Y agreed to come in weekly for interview skills and we did role play sessions and included other staff members who supported and gave feedback and advice which Y appreciated. Y and I worked on improving his CV together as did not adequately show his skills or experience.

I integrated calming techniques into our one to one sessions as well as confidence building because every job Y did not get was affecting his self-esteem. We spoke about extending his search and applying for a variety of positions.

Y applied for a number of roles in areas such as support worker, data analysis, business and administration, an apprenticeship role specifically aimed at participants on the Moving On Up project and customer service. However, for various reasons these opportunities were short lived and highlighted the need for a different approach to helping Y to secure employment.

We discussed the possibility of Y joining an agency where he could get experience in customer service and other roles, including training that would put him in a position to secure temporary and then permanent work. Y joined an agency and expressed happiness that he found a job through the agency and feels better because of all the training and support sessions. Y thanked me for all the help throughout and says he is very grateful for everything I have done for him.

STEP UP & LLOYDS FOUNDATION

Step Up

Funded by the Youth Futures Foundation, Step Up is a project that supports young people who either have criminal records or are at risk of offending. The project targets 16-24 year olds who live in Brent, Harrow, Barnet, Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham. While the project is open to all, it does focus on young people from black and minority ethnic groups.

Consistent with a number of our other projects, the practical/structural barriers of young people faced included but was not limited to the following:

- criminal record
- unemployment
- low/no qualifications
- no/outdated CV
- no GP
- no bank account
- no fixed address
- alcohol/substance misuse
- insufficient food
- welfare/debt/disclosure issues.

The project provided:

- up to 12 months' casework support.
- supplementary mentoring support where required.
- a diagnostic needs/skills assessment (e.g., literacy, numeracy, IT skills).
- bespoke delivery to address individual needs.
- a personalised action plan with weekly one-to-one reviews (1-2 hours).
- one-to-one bespoke, matrix-accredited IAG, including criminal convictions disclosure.
- solutions to personal, practical, and structural employment barriers (including digital skills support).
- employability support, including workshops, CV writing, job search, job profiling, application forms, interview skills/techniques.
- access to in-house short vocational courses, e.g., CSCS testing, Food Hygiene, Traffic Marshal/Banksman Training.
- clear progression pathways, including support to progress into volunteering, work tasters/placements, and job opportunities with our employer/community organisation partners.
- employment transition/in-work plan
- wraparound support, including referral to specialist support organisations e.g., accommodation/housing issues, legal/immigration advice, alcohol/substance misuse, mental health support, and counselling services.

STEP UP & LLOYDS FOUNDATION

- up to 12 weeks' aftercare, tracking, and post-completion support: e.g., weekly face-to-face contact with phone/text follow-up.
- programme exit review.

This project is independently evaluated. Throughout 2022 we worked with Sheffield Hallam University and latterly the Institute of Employment Studies (IES) to establish the parameters of the evaluation and look forward to continuing and developing this relationship into 2023.

Lloyds Foundation

The Lloyds bank Foundation have been a long-standing partner, supporter and funder of PLIAS Resettlement that stretches back a number of years. The Lloyds Bank Foundation have previously funded PLIAS Resettlement to deliver projects but at the end of 2021, they awarded the organisation an unrestricted grant for two years. The freedom that came with this grant enabled the organisation to spend the funding on customer needs as they emerged in 2022 and also on elements of organisational development.

As we emerged from 2021 and the various national lockdowns the challenges for some of our customers had been exacerbated and others persisted.

The needs of our customers remain as follows:

- support with training consistent with their career aspirations and goals
- sustainable employment
- career information and guidance within the context of having a criminal record
- employability training
- support with housing
- debt and financial counselling support
- mental health and well-being support
- access to financial support for food, utilities
- drugs and alcohol support

While our primary goal is to support our customers into education, training and employment, the above represents the wrap around holistic support that our customers often present with and need. We continued to support the following customer groups throughout 2022:

- adult ex-offenders
- female offenders
- young people at risk of offending / re-offending
- women experiencing and fleeing domestic violence
- young girls at risk of harmful practices

STEP UP & LLOYDS FOUNDATION

·In addition to funding the on-going work of the charity, the Lloyds Foundation funding also assisted PLIAS in meeting specific challenges that the organisation experienced in the year, challenges that were in some instances costly.

As we move into 2023 and the second year of the Lloyds Foundation grant, we are looking to access “Enhance” support from Lloyds which will enable us to develop and implement a self-sustainability strategy, developing ideas we have around monetising various areas of our service delivery and thus developing new streams of income that will be reinvested into the work of the charity.

The John Lyons Charity

We are delighted to welcome The John Lyons Charity as one of our funders, supporters and partners. The John Lyons Charity has enabled us to extend our youth work to engage more young people who either have criminal records or are at risk of offending into training and employment. This project is a pro-social casework model that provides wrap around support that addresses offending behaviour and barriers to moving into training and employment. We are at the start of our journey with The John Lyons Charity and look forward to working with them over the course of the three year project.

P&ACT PROJECT

We have been working in collaboration on the P&ACT project since 2019. The project provides support to Black and minoritised women and girls who are at greater risk of being affected by domestic and sexual violence, including FGM (female genital mutilation).

Violence against women and girls is a major human rights violation, and Black and minoritised women are disproportionately impacted by different forms of abuse. They are not only impacted by the interpersonal abuse they experience, but also by the systemic inequalities within services they may need to access, such as the criminal justice system, education, healthcare, and housing for their safety and protection.

The Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC) identified a gap in service provision to meet the needs of African and Caribbean women and girls experiencing domestic abuse and other harmful practices and reached out to PLIAS Resettlement for our expertise in working with African Caribbean women and ex-offenders to meet this need. (Extract taken from the Foreword written by Sarbjit Ganger, CEO, Asian Women's Resource Centre, for the 'Her Rising' Book, PLIAS et al. 2022).

The P&ACT Partnership includes 12 specialist organisations, targeting women and girls. The lead agency is the Asian Women's Resource Centre.

Our project targets women and girls of African and Caribbean heritage but is open to all. It is delivered across 5 London boroughs, which includes, Barnet, Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, and Ealing.

There continues to be large gaps in service provision for African and Caribbean women and girls, therefore our work helps to plug this gap. When it comes to addressing the unique challenges that Black women face when dealing with domestic abuse, the starting point must come from the community. Therefore, the funding we received from the Council through the Brent Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) in 2022 to engage with Black Majority Churches in raising their awareness and delivering training to recognise domestic abuse and provide support to victims and survivors was a step in the right direction. We will report on the outcomes from the Church Stepping Up project in our 2023 Annual Report.

Like parts of London which saw the tragic death of Sarah Everard, Brent was also affected by the murders of three women: The tragic death of Denise Keane-Simmons, murdered by her husband in Harlesden, very little has been reported about her tragic death; and the two sisters, Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman who were stabbed to death in Fryent Park. These murders have shocked us all, now more than ever there is an urgent need to provide greater safety, support and protection for women and girls. It is now three years since Denise was murdered, and the Domestic Homicide Review has stalled. We keep asking ourselves the question why? We continued to work throughout 2022 in giving a voice to women where they need to raise their concerns and be supported.

P&ACT PROJECT

Some of our achievements in the project during 2022 are listed below.

- We played in key role in supporting 40 women with complex and challenging needs to ensure their needs are met.
- We delivered one to one emotional support in a confidential and sensitive setting; women were able to access much needed counselling support with 12 women benefiting from culturally appropriate counselling.
- We supported women with utility bills, food vouchers, sanitary products.
- We delivered community-based awareness workshops to both voluntary and statutory organisations which were attended by over 90 individuals over the year.
- We delivered 10 prevention workshops through our freedom programme. The workshops were attended by 25 women who had experienced domestic abuse in their past or present relationship. The aim of the workshop was to help women understand and recognise signs of abusive behaviour and potential unhealthy relationships. It was a support group that helped women to deal with their situation in a confidential and safe environment.
- We marked International Women's Day 2022 with a coffee morning.
- We celebrated Black History Month with a session of poetry and dance.
- We were a member of the Domestic Homicide Review into the tragic murder of Denise Keane-Simmons.
- We published and launched the 'Her Rising' Book in 2022. The book is an anthology of true stories from some of our clients. This is available on Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk/Her-Rising-PLIAS-Resettlement/dp/B09YQQK1KR

During 2020 we undertook a review of the Phoenix (P&ACT) project to examine and explore the current gaps in meeting the needs of African and Caribbean women. We have come up with an action plan which focusses on different approaches, and the changes required to ensure that the identified needs of African and Caribbean women can be delivered in a different way that is reflective of their support needs. It was important for the project to reflect on its work being undertaken currently and how domestic abuse services are being delivered to African and Caribbean heritage women under the current MOPAC contract. The actions from the review are currently being implemented.

PHOENIX BACK2WORK

The Phoenix Back2work project is an employability project for women experiencing multiple disadvantages, such as being an ex-offender or having experienced or experiencing domestic abuse. The project is open to women from 18 years upwards living in the boroughs of Brent and Harrow. Whilst predominantly working with women from Black and Minoritized backgrounds, the project also provides support to women from other backgrounds.

The project is funded by the Pilgrim Trust and started in May 2021. The project provides 1:1 support for female ex-offenders and women who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse to get back into employment, education, or training. During our support, we explore innovative and effective methods to help reduce the risk of re-offending and support women to return to or engage in the workforce.

The women we supported have experienced extreme and complex situations. The time invested in working with these women is significant, utilising our specialist skills and knowledge to foster positive outcomes. This is not necessarily a challenge that can be resolved easily but with engaging with each woman individually.

Through Multi Agency Partnership working, we have identified various opportunities for women with multiple and complex needs and barriers to accessing education, employment and training. Where there is a need, we have made referrals to other organisations to acquire specialist support for our clients. We have facilitated links with health care, mental health, education, training, employment, and counselling agencies.

We supported 26 women - 9 women into work and 4 into training - through a bespoke programme, which included personal development, employability, and 'soft' skills training. This involved components listed below.

- Comprehensive diagnostic needs and skills assessments, including literacy, numeracy and IT skills.
- A personalised action plan with monthly 1:1 review.
- Solutions to employment barriers, including budgeting and money management.
- Information, advice, and guidance, including disclosure.
- Employability training, including CV writing, job search, application completion and interview practice.
- Signposting to local support organisations to provide specialist assistance.
- Group Activities, including Improving IT skills, Interviewing Techniques, Self-Esteem, and Self-Care.

The project has enabled us to provide a women-only space when required at our Bridge Park Office site, which has helped us to foster a sense of community. We have further developed our expertise in working with women from the BAME community and from other backgrounds who have been through the criminal justice system.

PHOENIX BACK2WORK

Through our Multi Agency Partnership working we have been able to identify various opportunities for women with multiple and complex needs. We have facilitated links with mainstream agencies, especially employment, mentoring and counselling agencies such as PMP Recruitment, Only a Pavement Away, Smart Works, Brent works, Brent Start and Each Counselling. Through these links we have managed to secure further opportunities for some women on the project, which has enabled women to receive additional support. Women have feedback that they have found the additional support extremely beneficial in building their confidence and helping them to get ready to return to the job market.

GLOBAL THINKING

The Global Thinking project is a diversionary project set up to provide support to girls and young women aged 8 to 25 in line with the United Nations agenda to make gender equality a reality across Brent. The project is led by the Young Brent Foundation who have formed working partnerships with several key organisations to develop initiatives and strategies to address gender-based violence.

The focus of the project is to concentrate on the needs of girls and young women to address the specific inequalities they face which can range from experience of violence and/or exploitation, domestic abuse, drugs and/or sexual abuse, being involved in gangs and or criminal activities, and lack of parental support around their education.

PLIAS began working on the project in 2020 with the aim of raising young people's aspirations and ambition to make positive life choices. The focus of our work has been on meeting the needs of girls and young women to address the specific inequalities they face, particularly the intersectional issues that too often result in gender-based violence.

During 2022 we supported over 20 girls and young women with challenging issues from various backgrounds. The ages ranged from 8 to 21 years across various areas in Brent. The support provided to girls and young women have helped them to deal with a range of difficulties they were facing such as dealing with physical and emotional abuse, criminal justice issues, domestic abuse, caring responsibilities, poor school attainment and attendance etc.

The project has supported some of the most vulnerable girls and young women with challenging needs in Brent to reach their ambitions. We have developed partnerships with different local and national organisations to support our work, working in collaboration with partners such as Unique Community, which is an inclusive performing arts group, Higher Potential which focuses on mentoring disenfranchised young people and Young Adults Away from gangs, anti-social behaviour, offending, and assisting them in developing positive social and life skills.

Mental health has been a key factor for young people. We have had to use different methods when engaging with young people which is dependent on how well they are feeling on the day. Consistent engagement can be a struggle at times for some young girls and women, which impacts their ability to reach their goals. Keeping them motivated has been one way of keeping them engaged through our one-to-one support. We have used different methods of communication, which included WhatsApp messaging, texts, emails, zoom, MS Teams meetings and taking young people to safe places such as coffee shops where they could relax.

GLOBAL THINKING

The Global Thinking Project outcomes and impact has been achieved through our joined-up working with the Young Brent Foundation and Start Easy and our other partners in supporting some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and young women.

Our impact includes:

- improved general health and well-being by supporting and responding to intersectional needs.
- increased contact and referrals to specialist and mental health services.
- improved emotional well-being, confidence building, and resilience to develop young people's understanding of power and control.
- improved confidence of girls and young women to act, to speak up and gain access to support, to transform their frustrations into action.
- increase in building relationships with parents, family members, schools.
- increased protection of girls and young women from violence and/or sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, drugs/alcohol and being involved in or joining a gang by working with various specialist organisations.

In collaboration with our Global Thinking Partners, we have delivered a successful project with positive outcomes for girls and young women providing access to support and transforming their frustrations into action.

CELLNEX PROJECT

We were put forward for funding by the London Community Foundation to Cellnex, a multi-technology communications company offering endless opportunities to bring the world closer through telecom connectivity. The Cellnex project started in February 2020 and has now been completed.

We were funded to provide support to individuals that had found themselves to be digitally excluded and were struggling with day-to-day activities and found that little support was available to them. Our focus was working with women from black and other minoritised background in obtaining digital skills, however we were able to extend our services to support both men and women from all ethnicities as there was a demand for this support to provide our clients with a better understanding of modern technology to progress further in their career path and keep up with the digital world.

Many of our clients had been away from the working environment due to reasons such as serving a prison sentence. Additionally, women who were returning to work after having a family expressed that returning back to work seemed quite a daunting experience as they did not know how to create a CV, send applications, nor where to look for job opportunities. It was a real challenge not being able to complete simple tasks such as sending an email with attachments, completing an online application, uploading documents, booking online appointments and managing online accounts such as universal credit which they were asked to do by the job centre.

We successfully supported 306 individuals in total. The breakdown of the support is as follows:

- 112 to Upload CVs onto websites.
- 149 to complete forms online.
- 38 to book appointments.
- 13 to operate Zoom/Teams technology.
- 33 to improve their internet security.
- 64 to create email accounts and send email.
- 56 to create word documents.
- 4 to prevent internet fraud.
- 1 to edit documents.
- 5 with Internet Research.
- 19 with online tests.
- 13 with Excel spreadsheets.
- 3 with college applications.

CELLNEX PROJECT

Our main objective was to support individuals who found themselves digitally excluded after being removed from modern technology for many years. We were able to reach our main objective to ensure that individual needs were met by providing them with one-to-one support and small workshop sessions. The individuals became more familiarised with modern technology, and it enabled them to continue to help themselves at home. This also helped them to progress further in their lives as many did feel that their lack of IT skills was a barrier, such as not knowing how to manage an email account or managing universal credit which is the requirement by the jobcentre, as all claimants are expected to be able to use their online account for all correspondence and little help is provided. We also supported individuals in areas such as CV writing, internet searches and job applications which led to individuals securing employment and going on to become more confident and familiarised with modern technology.

The impact from this funding has helped our organisation to provide support to individuals who would otherwise not have access to this specific support for which there is a great demand. There are not many organisations that provide specific one to one IT support, this was a view that many clients who received our support had expressed. Spending time with the clients and helping them to complete specific tasks was significant as many organisations such as job centres and probation service and other training providers had neither the time nor the resources. Our advisers were successfully able to spend quality time with our clients on a one to one basis, which consisted of regular appointments, until their needs were met.

CELLNEX CASE STUDY

J was referred by Free2learn for employment and training support. We completed an initial assessment and here it was established that J was a lady who had been through some difficulties as she had come out of an abusive relationship and was trying to move forward with her life. J felt that her lack of confidence stopped her from pursuing her goals such as improving her IT skills.

J had expressed that she had started a course with Mind which she left midway due to personal issues and wanted to be put forward for the course with them again as it was very close to where she lived. J was referred for the course and was able to start in January 2022.

I continued to support her on a weekly basis with areas such as CV writing which we created together. J also updated me regularly with how she was getting along with the course. She informed that she was struggling with the course as she found that the course tutor was hurrying the sessions and was not helping the learners to understand a task before moving on to the next. She also mentioned that the other students felt the same. I suggested that J speak to the tutor along with other students about this as he may not be aware of the issue in hand. During my sessions I also helped J with specific IT such tasks such as how to change her password on her email, how to register with agencies and how to upload her CV onto websites.

Some time later, J unfortunately had a fall in her home and as a result of this accident was asked to rest for a couple of weeks, she had cuts to her forehead and was given painkillers to ease the pain. She was immensely distressed as she felt that this was stopping her from progressing. I encouraged her and told her not to worry and reassured her that we could continue once she is ready. After a series of weekly check-in calls, J eventually agreed to attend the free2learn office for an appointment when she had recovered from the accident. I was hoping for J to attend our basic IT workshop in Hanger Lane as I felt that this would be great for her to attend before she started her IT course. However, due to J only recently recovering from the accident I felt it was too far for her to travel and instead decided to provide her one-to-one sessions at the free2learn premises. J is now enrolled on an IT course with Hackney Adult Learning Centre which will commence in June 2023. J is also attending weekly appointments delivered via one-to-one workshop sessions with J completing tasks such sending messages by email with attachments and uploading her CV onto employment websites.

J has proved that a little support can sometimes go a long way. She only needed a little guidance and support as at the time she was feeling quite vulnerable due to her personal experience and her accident. She is now very confident to help herself and has realised that she must work hard but also speak up when needed. I will continue to support J through her journey on the IT course, and will continue with one to one workshop sessions on areas where she needs support.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a vital part of the organisation as it helps us to better understand who we are reaching, what services we should aim to deliver and how much of an impact our services would have on the needs of our clients. The purpose of data analysis is to observe the effectiveness of the services delivered by the organisation to its customers as this is an integral part of the organisations mission statement which is to ensure that we are supporting those within the community by providing the necessary tools within the context of Information Advice and Guidance. Further to this, one of the organisation's aims is to provide a tailor-made service, with personalised content to best meet the needs of our clients.



Siobhan Stewart
Data Analyst

We were given an exciting opportunity to work in collaboration with the Institute of Employment Studies (IES) which was commissioned by the Youth Futures Foundation to evaluate one of our Youth Projects by the name of Step Up. This evaluation analyses data taken from approximately 100 young adults between the ages of 16 – 24 years old who have been involved in, or are at risk of involvement in the Criminal Justice System. The overarching aim is to observe both short term and intermediate outcomes achieved, some of which include: engagement in Employment, Education and Training; changes in confidence; and improvement in employability skills, amongst others. Working with IES has especially enabled us to re-evaluate the way that we collect and store our data. It has highlighted areas in need of development, in particular the way that we use and store data. The collaboration has also given us the ability to analyse the data that we have collected to determine whether or not we are achieving the outcomes and programme goals that have been set. The increased data has enhanced the reliability and validity of the information the data provides due to the ability to identify patterns and trends. Due to the increase of data it has been important that we also monitor the quality of the data and ensure that it is compliant to guidelines and specifications that we aim to attain.

As part of the Quality and Compliance Assurance process we have implemented scorecards and Quality and Compliance checks to ensure the integrity of the data that we collect. The scorecards are based on a set of Quality and Compliance assessment criteria for areas such as GDPR compliance, Delivery, Needs Assessment and outcome evidence to ensure that we are maintaining an acceptable level of standard of service delivery.

So far it has been a hugely beneficial experience being able to uncover patterns and trends during the data collection and analytical process as it has ultimately given us valuable insights into our customers journey from the point of referral through our Needs Assessments and Action Plan data, right through to the generating of outcomes. This information has helped us to form case studies and to build a better picture for the purposes of both current and future projects and funding applications.

We have also been able to delve deeper into our service user demographics and incorporate this into our continuous improvement.

A SNAPSHOT OF 2022 AT PLIAS RESETTLEMENT



Tara Benedetti
General Manager

2022 was an exciting year for PLIAS Resettlement. On the 20th May 2022 a van left Bridge Park Complex at 4am and headed for the Rhyd Ddu path of Mount Snowdon, Wales. Five staff members and five service users hiked a six hour round trip to raise money for Brent Families in need of school supplies that coming September.

Eight of the ten had never hiked a mountain before. This hike tested the endurance, fortitude and patience of all. Some of the “whys” for taking on the challenge can be read below.

“I want to inspire people to give in a season when it is hardest to do so”.

“I’m doing this hike to show older women, particularly black women that we can do anything that we set our minds to do”.

“I’m doing this hike to challenge myself and to experience something completely out of the norm for myself and people like me”.



With the money raised we were able to provide 95 school uniform vouchers to children from disadvantaged families who attend Wykeham Primary School in Brent. This was made extra special as Betania, one of PLIAS Resettlement employees, and hikers use to attend the school.

The 2019-2023 Borough Plan for Brent set out to: “share in cultural opportunities and activities, and value the principles of fairness, equality.....People will feel that they and their children are safe, cared for and can achieve and that they receive excellent services when they need them.”

The funding we received from Track Academy this year enabled us to run a summer programme that allowed young people between the ages of 16-24 to access free sports activities that were facilitated by reputable and highly qualified sports coaches. The Summer Sports Programme provided an opportunity for young people in Brent to be in a safe space, for a period, throughout the school holiday.

“15.5% residents live in income deprived households and 27% of full-time workers earn below the London Living Wage of £10.85 per hour” therefore, this programme opened an opportunity for a percentage of young people to access a service they would not otherwise be able to afford. “9% of Brent adults have diabetes and 12% of residents have high blood pressure” consequently it is important for us as an organisation to ensure that we are contributing to educate the next generation, with the aim of supporting better decision making around their health and wellbeing. Lastly, “64% of the 329,800 residents of Brent are from Black, Asian and other minority groups” which makes the London Borough of Brent a richly diverse borough. This programme directly supported the borough’s Black Community Action Plan which seeks to address early intervention to help young people to steer away from anti-social behaviour and violent crime. This programme enabled young people to access and engage with activities that were designed with them specifically in mind.



We were particularly keen on employing Brent residents to run the summer sports programme. It was important for us to recognise the talent we have locally. Recruitment was relatively simple. We recruited Lamar Russel who is a local football coach who is employed by another local organisation that supports young people by hosting afterschool/evening activities to engage the young people from the home of the borough's largest gang and whose residents were adversely affected by the pandemic due to health inequalities which span across the borough. For our boxing activity we recruited Stephen Graham and Justo. Stephen Graham is a multi-disciplinary educator, author, and filmmaker. He has a degree in sports medicine which he obtained in 2011; and is a qualified musculoskeletal rehabilitator, personal trainer and has various sports and health qualifications. Justo is a local music artist who has a strong and positive connection with his local community. Lastly we recruited Andrew Scheck, another local resident from Brent who is a personal trainer within the borough who specialises in body transformation. These facilitators were well connected with young people within the local area.



This year's Team Building Away day was held at a Sherlock's Escape Room. Two PLIAS Resettlement teams had to work together to solve the case. We finished off the day with some competition at a local go karting track. The team had a blast. The team continually appreciate the away days as they believe it is vital for the team to bond outside of the work environment and to work together on something out of the norm.



PLIAS Resettlement has acknowledged Black History Month over the years but in 2022 we decided to be intentional moving forward by assigning a budget to recognise the month. Shirley and Daniesh teamed up to design, implement and host a thought-provoking and inspirational event. The Purpose Outweighs the Challenge Talk including the tremendous Ade Hassan OBE founding owner of Nubian Skin, a lingerie and hosiery brand specializing in 'nude' undergarments for women of colour. And the exceptional Lee Lawrence. He was 11 years old when he witnessed the shooting of his mother Cherry Groce by police, sparking the 1985 Brixton riot. Lee Lawrence is a social entrepreneur who works to help marginalised people find their voice, manage conflict, and achieve justice. In 2014, he founded Mobility Enterprises with the hope of aiding those who would otherwise struggle in their daily life by providing public transport for the disabled. The event finished with an evening of networking, music and delicious food from Harlesden's very own Mumm's.



This year Kingsley achieved his ten-year work anniversary. Kingsley has been a valued member of the team for many years. He has been a mentor and guide to many staff members both previous and present. It was only fair we celebrated him in a special way. On the day of his actual work anniversary the team presented him a gift. As we all ate cake together we shared things that we valued most about him. Kingsley was overwhelmed by this however, we had lots more up our sleeve. Two weeks later Kingsley entered what he thought was a routine Monthly Staff Huddle which in fact turned out to be a 'This is your Life'. We had managed to contact previous PLIAS Resettlement employees, family members of Kingsley and present staff members contributed to the event. It is safe to say everyone in the room had a Cheshire Cat smile and there was great need for the Kleenex box. At the end of the year all staff members were asked to submit a photo of something that made them smile in 2022. We all knew we had done a great job when Kingsley submitted his ten-year work anniversary photo!



2022 has not been without its difficulties. The cost-of-living crisis has seen the need for our support increase but in the words of our late Queen Elizabeth ii "When life seems hard, the courageous do not lie down and accept defeat. Instead, they are all the more determined to struggle for a better future."

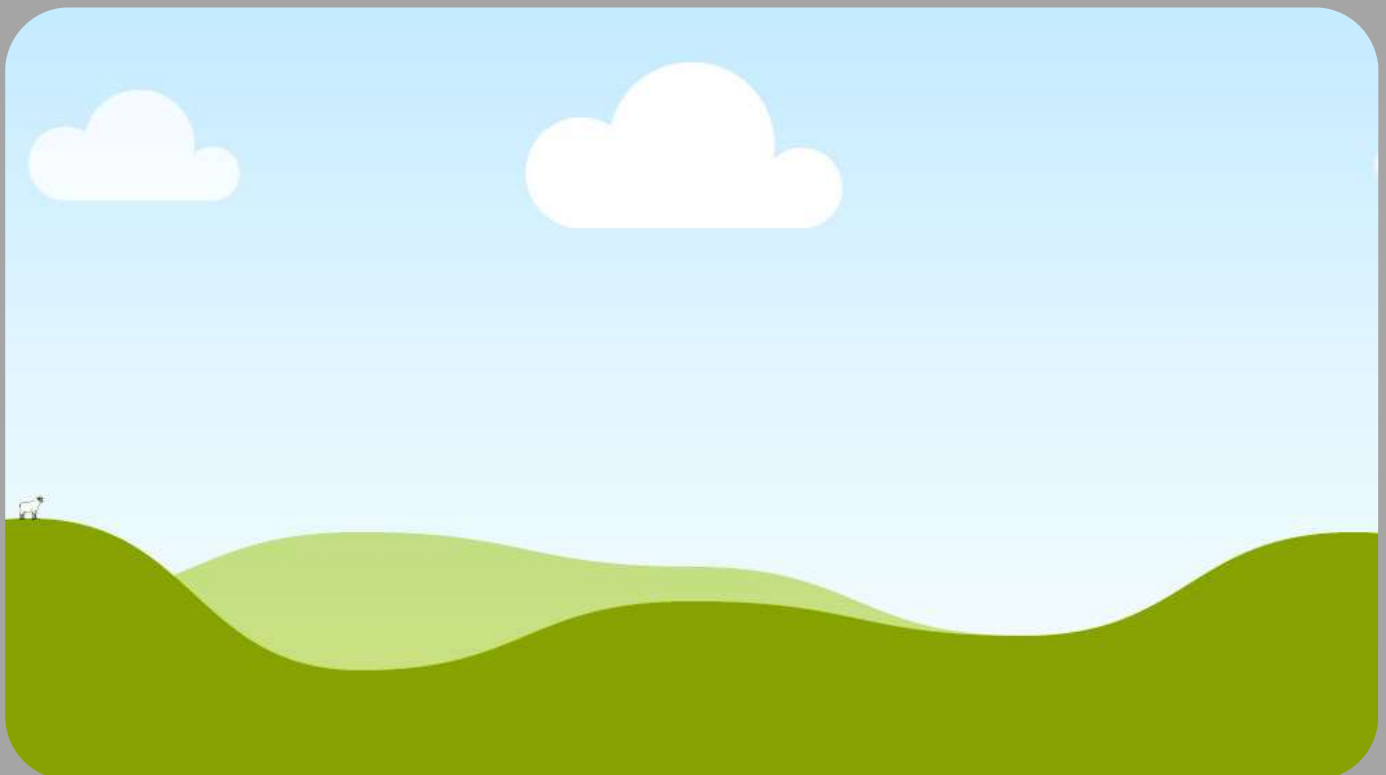
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

"i came here (PLIAS) for one thing and received so much more, you guys helped me with food vouchers, i didn't know how i was going to eat tonight, thank you"

"i'm working, i passed the CSCS course and have got a job, i haven't been out long so this is great, i want to show my little man that he can be proud of me"

"i'm grateful for all the support,thank you"

"because of PLIAS i feel better about myself, I feel safe and am far more settled, not perfect but in a much better place"



FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

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