

BRENT MUTAL AID NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2020



This month:
We look to the future.





CORONAVIRUS CASES ARE RISING IN BRENT



Prevent a second lockdown



- Wash your hands regularly
- Wear a face covering



- Get a free test, if you have symptoms
- Stay at home, if you have the virus



BE A NEIGHBOURHOOD HERO

LOOK TO JOIN

#MUTUAL

AID

GROUPS IN
YOUR
AREA!

**MUTUAL
AID IS THE
VOLUNTARY
RECIPROCAL
EXCHANGE OF
RESOURCES
AND SERVICES
FOR MUTUAL
BENEFIT.**

**HELP YOUR
NEIGHBOURS
TODAY, SO THEY CAN
HELP YOU
TOMORROW.**



@nicolemcomix

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Welcome to the August newsletter. This month we look forward to the future ...

We have had an incredible response to our [July edition](#) from wards across Brent. Mutual Aid groups are run entirely by volunteers and work independently, most linking with local established charities and partnering organisations. Brent Council is offering small grants targeted towards helping Mutual Aid groups. To see how grants are being used, we have featured the Dollis Hill ward.

Since March 2020, many of us still have the curious sensation of having lost all sense of time and space. How are we already in August and halfway through the year? Yet, we haven't stopped being busy. Over the course of these last few weeks, life has certainly started to slowly evolve; we have more ability to move around and many places and businesses are gradually opening. However, there are a great number of people who need support in some form or another for the foreseeable future. Tentative steps have now been taken with people resuming normal activities, whilst still keeping safe. For some it is still daunting on how to move forward until there is a vaccine.

As the news about a lockdown of the country came in, many businesses knew that life was going to change drastically for a lot of people. Many also knew that they have a vital role to play in the months to come. One such business is Brent's very own [Yum Yum Food Company](#). Its director and founder Abigail Simon, together with the help of many volunteers and trusted suppliers, over a short space of time, turned into a lifeline for countless key workers and vulnerable local people, preparing and delivering more than 3,000 meals a day.

People's needs are changing financially, exasperated by furloughed staff. Mutual Aid groups across the borough have come together to set up the [Brent Solidarity Fund](#) to provide assistance to Brent residents who are struggling financially. A massive thank you to Ella, Dan, Esther, Pat, Jess, Rob, Sandra, Sean and Raf for setting this up. The launch is planned for August 2020, and your support is very much needed. Click the link above to support the initiative.

Our hearty congratulations to Daksha Varsani and Paresh Jethwa from [Community Response Kitchen](#) (CRK) who received A Points of Light Award by Prime Minister, Boris Johnson. CRK have served a staggering 200,000 vegetarian Indian meals to NHS staff and vulnerable people during COVID-19.

Thank you for your continued support for the communities across Brent.

Nina Gallagher

NEWS FROM THE WARDS

Every month we will bring you features from different wards across Brent. In this issue we are looking on how Mutual Aid can evolve going forward.

BRONDESBURY PARK

Since mid-March, we have been helping a number of residents in need with shopping and household errands, regularly checking in with them and providing food donations to those in need. We have supported and benefited from the Gift Your Neighbour scheme, which continues to help families in Brondesbury and Queen's Park, Kensal Rise and beyond.

Two months worth of donations were raised through our own Open Collective Account, in order to cover bi-weekly meal orders from Daksha's Community Response Kitchen, Bread 'n Butter, Ariana II, and Yum Yum Kitchen, as well as small expenses such as phone credits. Together with the generous offer of a free jar of honey for every £10 given, donated by our local beekeeper and volunteer Peter William's own 'Lockdown Honey'. We also owe huge gratitude to the incredible generosity of local paella chef Nick Friedman, who donated a meal to MA Brondesbury Park for every ten sold during his long spell of "Paella Thursdays" on Mowbray Road.

Even though the second week of July has seen our cooked food deliveries to Brondesbury Park residents come to an end, many of whom were elderly and shielding,

some of our 12 mini groups are still quite active. As well as a comms volunteer, an admin, and a team of drivers - including one driver making regular deliveries to the Granville. Our little army of volunteers has been put to the test amidst thousands of whatsapp messages.

Sadly, for some families, the situation is still dire and we have had to refer them to other free food schemes. Others felt that they could manage without the deliveries for the time being, although it has been evident that these meal deliveries have had a positive nutritional as well as social impact.

As a result, and following on from discussions about which charities Mutual Aid could partner up with, we are currently building a relationship with the charity Elders Voice in Kensal Green with the aim to extend Brent Mutual Aid efforts into their framework. There are also discussions about creating a low cost, nutritious "Meals on Wheels" provision throughout Brent, facilitated by Mutual Aid. This is all dependent on funding and several options are being explored.

A few of the impressions from these last few, very memorable months.

Cosima Shaw

.....
A RESIDENT'S REACTION TO ONE OF OUR OLDER AND MOST ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS:

'I was highly impressed to see him turn up on his bicycle, keeping fit and healthy. Wow!'



Handmade slippers - a thank you gift from a family



Peter's 'Lockdown' Honey



1 of 30 facemasks made by a local costume designer for Granville volunteers

DOLLIS HILL

Dollis Hill is a relatively small Mutual Aid group, but as we know small is beautiful. Dudden Hill Mutual Aid helped us initially and Rob Harrison from St Catherine's Church was pivotal in working with local volunteers to respond to the community's needs.

We organised leaflets to be distributed to every flat and house in Dollis Hill, and followed up via phone where applicable. We had an excellent response to the leaflets, with as many volunteers offering to help as those requesting help. Our loyal and steady group of volunteers have responded to residents' requests to shop and deliver, to collect prescriptions and other provisions. The volunteers provide support for those who cannot leave their homes, as well as for those who are desperate and lacking means.

We have worked with Sufra food bank, Daksha's Community Response Kitchen, the Mutual Aid Willesden Food, and Compassionate Kitchens to supply our residents with either hot food or

groceries. Emad Al Ebadi and the Iraqi Welfare Association, based in Dollis Hill, in association with AMAFHH Investments also played their part through their 'Urgent Food Drive Campaign' distributing large bags of fruit, vegetables and other treats, which were all very well received by residents. These organisations were invaluable, and we know that the visits from our volunteers were as welcome as the provision. So, all the help was very much appreciated.

The Dollis Hill Mutual Aid group really makes you feel proud to be part of a community. There is a culture of good cheer and helpfulness.

Looking towards the future of our group, we would like to continue in the same positive attitude and to work to support vulnerable people in the community. We are also hoping to have a celebration in Gladstone Park in the autumn to thank all the volunteers.

Liz Dixon



DUDDEN HILL

The number of requests has drastically dropped but needs are still there. Through Mutual Aid Food Willesden, we have continued helping local residents with food parcels, however, we also feel that we need to help beyond just food as many residents feel isolated.

Recently, we helped an elderly resident in Neasden who broke her phone and was in tears as she was not able to make an important phone call. We asked Dollis Hill Mutual Aid for a donated phone and someone came forward within an hour. The resident was so thankful for the swift response.

Another resident, a single mother with three young children, had only 80 pounds to live on last month. With help from Willesden Green, we donated money to help her pay the bills. We also organised for her to speak to a social prescriber. Other residents gave books, games, and clothes for her children.

These are just a few examples to demonstrate the need to work in close cooperation with other mutual aid groups, regardless of ward boundaries, in order to help local people rapidly.

Kieumy Pham Thai

FRYENT & QUEENSBURY



As we have all been gradually easing out of lockdown, and day to day life has been changing for the community as well as for everybody else, people's needs have evolved too. Although we wish to continue to provide the same support we have done since we began, within our group of volunteers we have also asked ourselves how we could develop in order to still be of greatest use and benefit to our neighbourhood community. We all have something to offer towards other people's well-being, and the desire to help certainly has not diminished!

Our first area of focus has been on services 'outdoors'; helping people to perhaps venture outside whilst they are still keeping safe, or in some cases those who may feel a little daunted about how to approach this after lockdown. Being incredibly fortunate as we are to have so many lovely green spaces in our areas, we are exploring the possibilities

for offering fitness classes in parks, as well as increasing the walking groups which are currently on offer. We are also supporting local residents who have found it a little more challenging to maintain their gardens, whether this be by helping with gardening, clearing, or even fetching supplies from a garden centre.

As well as keeping the body active, we can also contribute to keeping the mind active too. We are researching various ideas which range from community online quizzes to a local art competition for children. With this in mind, we feel it is important to continue to support people who are isolated not only by providing practical assistance, but not forgetting the crucial need for interaction and conversation. The power of a friendly voice and face.

Jacqueline Perez

KENSAL GREEN

Our Mission at Kensal Green Mutual Aid is to contribute to our connected, caring, resilient, and strong community, by enabling a large and diverse volunteer support network, where every neighbour is reassured they will find support in times of crisis. We partner as equals. We work together, in a spirit of solidarity, to support and look out for one another. We work alongside, but independently from the resources offered by councils, the voluntary sector, and other already existing services. Our vision is to connect our volunteers with initiatives that they are passionate about, and to create a space for ideas and community to flourish.



The KGMA vision:

- We will ensure that neighbours continue to receive support (food packages, supplies, household items, friendly phone calls, mental health signposting) to enhance their lives
- We will maintain an active social media presence to share the great work we do, and to promote community activities and local businesses
- We will reach our neighbours in need; increasing awareness of our work through flyer drops, business interactions, social media, and building our volunteer network
- We will facilitate improving the spirit of the Kensal Green community through local initiatives (walking groups, gardening clubs, community events)
- We will partner with other organisations, charities and the council to foster a robust support network for our neighbour

Katie Pascoe



KENTON / PRESTON

We are continuing to provide support to vulnerable and elderly residents and those shielding. In addition to this, we understand there are more needs in the community, many of which existed before the lockdown and have become more noticeable since the pandemic. These include mental health, wellbeing considerations, financial advice, support

and activities for young people, digital inclusion, and fundraising to provide much needed support for those struggling. We have created infrastructure and targeted streams to focus on and address each of these areas, to provide as much support and assistance as we can to our community.

MAPESBURY

As time goes on, MMA continues to adapt in alignment with the changing needs of our community. While some of our ways of working remain consistent, such as the pharmacy rota and community phone roster, we are seeing a change in needs and requirements. As a result of how things are evolving, we are adapting initiatives and creating new ones.

The financial implications of COVID-19 for many families have meant that we are being contacted by residents about more complex cases. These vary in type but include Advice4Renters referral, help with applying for credit and grants, and generally being a starting point for people who are in more complicated situations. Mapesbury Mutual Aid is also heavily involved with the Solidarity fund which will provide assistance to Brent residents who are struggling financially without an obligation to pay back money received. The aim is to have this fund up and running in August. In addition, as Mutual Aid Food Willesden is going to close at the end of August, we're looking to put a referral system in place to ensure that families are still able to access food support as we believe that the need will continue.

The ramifications for children and their education is evident and another focus

of ours as we explore ways that we can support them through this very unique time. This includes returning to school, and working with volunteer teachers to arrange tuition groups for those who could not ordinarily afford extra help.

Communal areas continue to be a source of comfort for many in their local area, especially for those who are still restricted in terms of travel. We have been looking at community vegetable garden maintenance and volunteer engagement for those with green hands.

We recognise that the emotional and mental toll on many during this time has been difficult and we are developing the idea of a Friendship Bench Walk and Talk. This would involve volunteers being trained in CBT techniques so that they could offer a 'listening bench' alongside friendly walks with residents. We are also sharing details of charities like Elders Voice, which volunteers are able to sign up to in order to support the older members of our community.

The work and plan is ongoing and our aim is to be nimble to adapt where necessary to meet the evolving requirements of our residents.

Aneeka Verma

NORTHWICK PARK

The COVID-19 pandemic has put into sharp focus the importance of community support to help the most vulnerable. While thankfully the peak has passed, unfortunately the virus has not left us and there are already concerns of a second wave as we head into the winter. Moreover, the economic and social consequences are likely to linger much longer than the pandemic, e.g. unemployment, money problems, fear, anxiety leaving the house, educational challenges, and poor health for those who were unable to access a hospital treatment or who have suffered long-term conditions as a result of contracting COVID-19.

We have been extremely lucky to have a longstanding community magazine as well as neighbourhood groups. This has allowed us to respond quickly, with the Mutual Aid group providing additional support for those areas which were not

covered, or for those volunteers wanting to do more.

We can now see there is scope for Northwick Park Mutual Aid to better connect and coordinate with these neighbourhood groups. Addressing these issues by partnering with other nearby Mutual Aid groups who are looking to achieve similar outcomes.

Of course, as the virus has abated, there is always the worry that volunteers' interest and availability may too - especially now that lockdown has eased and many people are returning to work. We need to continually find ways to keep the interest and enthusiasm going in order to meet current needs, and must be ready to remobilise and re-energise if a second wave arrives. This is perhaps going to be the greatest challenge going forward.

Alisha Patel

WEMBLEY PARK CENTRAL

Wembley Central Mutual Aid is currently in the process of formalising the group in order to be registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This will allow us to have access to funding and grants in the future.

We plan to continue to stay focussed on the needs of the local people and aim to help disadvantaged groups where we can. This will likely take the form of short or fixed term projects rather than ongoing ones, as many of our volunteers return to work following the lockdown and their ability to commit to long term projects reduces.

We have also recently set up a WhatsApp group for members with a variety of digital skills, who are going to help us create accounts on various social media platforms, with the possibility of a website too.

In addition to this we will continue to raise awareness of our group within the local community, to encourage people to join and build on the long term relationships which have been formed throughout the last few months.

Amisha Babla-Vagani

SUDBURY

As with all Mutual Aid groups, it has been an intense few months for Sudbury Local Aid. We have only just found the time to pause, reflect, and ask ourselves “where to next?” The last weekend before lockdown was focussed on getting the message out about the support available. Thanks to the outstanding support of dozens of volunteers we did this at breakneck speed by delivering thousands of leaflets to every household in the ward, in the space of just a few days.

During the weeks since, we have focussed on coordinating volunteering efforts; providing food and other forms of support to those in need across Sudbury; and triaging those with more complex needs for support from elsewhere. Now that some of the lockdown measures have eased, we have only just found the time to expand into other areas, whilst continuing to provide vital food and other support where needed.

We have focused on three things:

- Continuing to bring people together in times of need, with a new local website, a Facebook group, and a leafleting campaign to ensure nobody is left behind;
- Harnessing the enthusiasm of our amazing volunteers, by partnering with local charities who need help, e.g. a church-based group (Christmas Lunch) which has been calling hundreds of vulnerable and isolated people throughout lockdown;
- Building a greener, healthier environment in Sudbury, by partnering with a group called Sudbury Community Gardeners to do socially-distanced gardening in derelict plots of land in Perkin Close, Maybank Avenue, and Elms Court

It has been a painful and at times depressing few months for all of us in Sudbury, Brent, and across the UK. However, amidst all of this we have been able to draw on one another’s strength through everyone’s outstanding energy and enthusiasm. Whatever the next few months may bring, we will be stronger if we see through these challenges together.

Tom Stephens



Perkin Close, Sudbury - former derelict land transformed by community gardening



An ongoing gardening project in an island in Priory Close, Sudbury

WILLESDEN GREEN

Willesden Green ward has just completed its 600th request. On that exact same day, the ward celebrated one of the volunteers’ 100th case they had helped with - an amazing milestone demonstrating the kindness and selflessness of all our volunteers. It is beautiful to see the ward’s achievements and it enables a glimpse into what could be the future.

As in other wards, some people who have been helping are slowly starting to get back to work. We are finding ways for the ward to be revived. It is important that we are prepared in case of a localised outbreak. The plan is to do some leafleting again and to recruit more volunteers.

We are now moving forward in trying to find ways to help people who have been furloughed, perhaps via support links and other ways yet to be developed, e.g. ‘skill matching’ - if someone has a talent or skill, they could offer their services, and, in exchange, others could do the same. We are also exploring the ‘walking buddy scheme’, whereby residents would be paired with a buddy or two, in line with social distancing. We believe this would help with their confidence when leaving their home, especially after a long period of lockdown. We believe this will help with mental health.

The plans for the future of Mutual Aid are being discussed, they are always evolving and adapting according to the community’s needs, yet the beauty of it remains unchanged.

Marta Albright Autran Dourado



Willesden Green, 600 requests completed, may the future bring more



A little surprise for Jim on completing his 100th case

OUR COMMUNITY

The Yum Yum Food Company, Granville Community Kitchens, Community Response Kitchen, Harrow Care Plus have all shown incredible community spirit by supporting those in need. This month we celebrate their contributions to our community.

We also focus on the launch of the **Brent Solidarity Fund** which provides a lifeline for those struggling financially, and where your help is needed.

Focus on: **Harrow Care Plus**



HARROW CARE PLUS is a grassroots project that supports vulnerable families. They were awarded a Harrow Heroes Award in 2018.

“We are not funded or have paid staff. We do this because we are passionate about making a difference to the community. In 2018 we launched a pledge for St. Luke’s Hospice. This was to support their work by delivering flowers, running community activities around Brent and Harrow. We do not refuse to help anyone who needs practical support.”

Since the COVID-19 lockdown, with 25 volunteers, they have delivered approximately 750 parcels including food and shopping. They have supported their local community and beyond, by providing the following services:

- Shopping & delivering groceries
- Online Get moving classes
- Motivational telephone befriending
- Supporting food banks
- Assisting families with short term accommodation
- Supporting mother and baby units with starter food packs
- Raising £3000 for St.Lukes Hospice for end of Life care
- RAF refugee
- Blind hostel
- Care homes
- Music group therapy
- Post COVID-19 Patients
- Helping at mental health care homes
- Worship Place e.g. synagogues, churches, temples etc.

For more info visit:
www.harrowcareplus.org

Anjie Chhopia



Feature: **The Yum-Yum Food Company**

by **Andy Vassilev**



Abigail Simon's charitable spirit led her to open her home as a hub for local supermarkets to donate whatever they could no longer sell, and with the help of small teams of volunteers deliver these supplies to local food banks. Abigail has also spent the last few months travelling to Trafalgar Square every Saturday with 500 meals, 200 sandwiches and boxes of fruit and cake snacks, toiletries and clothing for the homeless.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to Abigail and the army of volunteers who have managed to help countless numbers of people during these trying times. Similar to many other businesses helping through this pandemic, The Yum Yum Food Company relies heavily on the charitable spirit and donations from everyone who can afford to do so.

[Click here](#) for Abigail's homeless charity donations page

The BMA team caught up with Abigail for a short interview

Abigail, tell us about yourself?

I have two boys aged 9 and 11 and a gorgeous dog called Strudel. My company is called The Yum Yum Food Company and I cater for nursery schools. I started this in 2003 and have been operating 51 weeks of the year ever since.

How has your business changed since lockdown?

My business effectively stopped operating since March 20th when schools first closed, by March 23rd I had started using my kitchens to cater for those in need, the first day we made 200 meals and within a few weeks I was making and distributing over 3000 meals a day, to a variety of people, NHS staff, homeless centres and individual vulnerable people and families in need. Through social media platforms, I built up a huge volunteer network for both kitchen support and delivery drivers, the response and generosity of people willing to help was amazing and humbling at the same time. The Felix Project and City Harvest donated most of the food.

In coming out of lockdown, my business won't restart properly until September so I am looking at other ways to utilise my kitchens. I now offer a local meal delivery service for local residents.

What services are you currently offering local residents?

I am now offering a frozen meal delivery service to local residents, we can offer

meals specially designed for children, and for elderly residents, the entire family can enjoy this service. We have specialised in catering meals since 2003 but previously we have operated business to business, now we have opened up to cater to individuals and families locally. If anyone would like to order please email us at orders@yumyumfoodcompany.co.uk, thank you.

What has been the most challenging aspect of the lockdown for you personally?

I think most parents can relate to this - juggling homeschooling, childcare and my charity work, whilst making sure my staff are ok too, and hoping that my business will recover.

Has your perception of the community changed since lockdown?

I think the best thing to come out of lockdown has been a sense of community - people have connected in so many ways, harnessing the power of social media to reach those most vulnerable, and also just the sheer joy of connecting with people and belonging to a community spirit with a desire to help those around us with no other motives. I have connected with extended neighbours too.

Tell us one thing no one knows about you.

That I secretly want to escape city life, move out to a home with land and just rescue lots of different animals!

.....

COMMUNITY RESPONSE KITCHEN

A Points of Light Award has been given by Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to Daksha Varsani and Paresh Jethwa, who founded the 'Community Response Kitchen' which has served a staggering 200,000 vegetarian Indian meals to NHS staff and vulnerable people during COVID-19. We will be featuring them in one of our issues later this year.

partnership to date, and Brent Mutual Aid is supporting Daksha to build a continuation plan for CRK. They are currently seeking new premises from which to operate, and they will be fundraising, applying for grants, and learning from other established organisations.

Katie Pascoe & Nina Gallagher

Daksha, Paresh, and the team have provided thousands of meals to our neighbours via our Mutual Aid volunteers. It has been an outstanding

Follow their progress on [Facebook](#)
Donate on [Paypal](#)



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GRANVILLE COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Granville Community Kitchens just announced that they are launching their new Good Food Box in early August, a radically different weekly vegetable bag scheme.

Every Wednesday, they will be packing bags of fresh, organic veg ready to feed households all over Kilburn.

- This is a model based on solidarity, not charity. They will charge two different prices for the vegetable bags, depending upon everyone's ability to pay, so that nutritious fresh vegetables are available to the whole of the community.
- They will adapt the produce content allowing residents to access vegetables appropriate to their cultural background.
- They will also buy directly from farmers so that they are guaranteed a fairer price.

Granville Community Kitchen is reimagining the localised food system, co-creating a community of abundance, healing and resilience, and they want us to get involved. They will place the most disaffected at the centre, co-creating a local response to social issues whilst building capacity, and lifting voices to advocate for structural change at local, national and international level. Every pound we spend with Granville Community Kitchens is an investment in the local community.

To learn more about our Good Food Boxes, and to refer local residents, get in touch on **0203 488 5815** or email goodfoodbox@granvillecommunitykitchen.org.uk

Kieumy Pham Thai

OUR COMMUNITY: INITIATIVES

UPDATE: MUTUAL AID WILLESDEN FOOD

The Mutual Aid Food Willesden raffle was a huge success! We sold over 1,800 tickets and raised £3,355 which is absolutely incredible.

This funding will all go towards continuing to support those in desperate need of essential aid. We have been blown away by your support and generosity so a HUGE

thank you to everyone who bought tickets and helped spread the word to family and friends.

Make sure to check your account on Raffall.com to see if you won. Congratulations if you won something and hope you all enjoy your prizes!

Laura Young

BRENT MUTUAL AID SOLIDARITY FUND

Mutual Aid groups across the borough have come together to set up the Brent Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to Brent residents who are struggling financially.

We are aiming to give small amounts of up to £50 per household, which can be used for anything. There is neither judgement nor any obligation to pay back the money. This is run in direct accordance with the principles of Mutual Aid "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need".

The fund is only as strong as its donations and we are asking neighbours to help their neighbours. If you CAN contribute to the fund, a

suggested contribution is one hour's wage per month, but smaller, larger, or one-off contributions are all welcome. You can make donations via the following link: [Brent Open Collective](#)

Whether you are contributing to the fund or withdrawing from it, or if you would like to get involved in the running of the fund, then please email us on brentsolidarityfund@gmail.com

The fund will open in August 2020, and we will be in touch with everyone with details on how to apply together with asking for your help to get the message of support out far and wide.

Esther Foreman



Checking in: COVID 19 Resident Survey

Brent Council would like to invite you to complete and help promote the resident survey, designed to build a better understanding of the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Brent.

Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of Brent Council, said:

"In these unprecedented times, we want to check in with residents. By better understanding how people have been affected by the pandemic, how they're feeling, as well as any current and future needs, we can plan accordingly."

"I encourage everyone to take the questionnaire, and please consider sharing with friends, family or neighbours who live in the borough."

Question topics range from mental health and wellbeing to how COVID-19 has affected respondent's finances or housing situation.

Take the survey [here](#).

NEWS from BRENT COUNCIL

BRENT COVID-19 TESTING

For further information [click here](#)

FACE COVERINGS

from Friday, 24th July 2020

For further information [click here](#)

BRENT CONNECTS IS BACK!

BRENT CONNECTS gives you a say about the issues which matter to you.

At each meeting, residents, businesses and community representatives can ask questions about services provided by us and other agencies in Brent. At each meeting, there is also a Soapbox Slot. This is your chance to have your say on any issue that concerns you, your neighbours or your community.

The meetings will take place online via Zoom. The next meeting takes place on:

MONDAY 10 AUGUST 2020, 6 TO 8PM

At this meeting will be discussing Brent's response to the Climate Emergency. Information about how to join will soon be published on the Councils' website and social media channels. We hope you will be able to join us.

MUTUAL AID GRANTS

Mutual Aid grants are a lifeline for wards, so they can bring aid to those in need

CASE STUDY: DOLLIS HILL MUTUAL AID WELFARE GRANT

Dollis Hill applied for the Mutual Aid Welfare grant, as we needed funds to reimburse our generous volunteers who were, on occasion, paying for provisions requested by residents. We realised this was not sustainable, so decided to apply for a grant.

Our volunteers were helping residents who did not have recourse to public funds or who had recently lost their jobs or sources of income, and who had not managed to complete the forms to receive welfare benefits. Some people relied on going to the food banks to supplement income and this is not as easy now. These residents needed help to 'fill the gap' until they were signed up for emergency council provisions or government benefits.

Each Mutual Aid group can apply through the charity with whom they work. In our case it was St Catherine's Church. You need to attach evidence

showing that the charity has certain necessary documents, e.g. a safeguarding policy, insurance, and a dedicated banking system to ensure transparency for the use of the funds. In our case, Reverend Rob Harrison and I worked together in order to complete all the sections. The process is not as arduous as it first seems, once you access the forms the process becomes easier! We understood why we had to complete the forms, as we were intending to use taxpayers money we are accountable for why we need the funds.

We have a few more forms to complete now that we have been successful in receiving the grant.

You are welcome to email: brentmutualaid@gmail.com should you wish to contact Dollis Hill for their ward's experience in applying for the grant. You can also apply to CVS as directed by the council, using the details on page 23 opposite.

Liz Dixon



MUTUAL AID GRANT TARGETED TO MUTUAL AID GROUPS IN BRENT

Brent Council is offering small grants of up to £500 targeted at helping the 20 Mutual Aid groups in Brent.

A Mutual Aid group must work with one of the registered partner organisations, who can apply on their behalf. The organisation must be based in Brent and able to demonstrate support from the local community for their proposed project.

The Mutual Aid organisation will be required to sign up to CVS Brent's 'Safety Framework for Community Groups' pack, if working with children and/or vulnerable adults, which will be part of the application form. Applications can be submitted at any time whilst the grant is available.

Are you in need of support to help your group or organisation meet the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond? We are here to help. Read more at [Community Support Letter](#) and get in touch.

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Applications are reviewed on a weekly basis to ensure decisions are made quickly.

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The project should be a one-off activity with a clear beginning and end.

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Further details, guidance, and the Expression of Interest form, can be found [here](#).

Editorial Team

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Mapesbury – Aneeka Verma
Northwick Park – Alisha Patel
Sudbury – Tom Stephens
Wembley Central – Amisha Babla-Vagani
Willesden Green – Marta Albright Autran Dourado
Mutual Aid Grant – Liz Dixon
Brent Businesses – Andy Vassilev
Mutual Aid Willesden Food – Laura Young
Harrow Care Plus – Anjie Chhapia
Community Response Kitchen – Katie Pascoe & Nina Gallagher
Granville Community Project – Kieumy Pham Thai
Brent Mutual Aid Solidarity Fund – Esther Foreman

Thank you ...

Brent Mutual Aid Communications Team
Brent Mutual Aid Website & Graphic Design Team
Brent Mutual Aid Social Media Team
Brent Mutual Aid Ward Reps
Brent Mutual Aid Volunteers Communications Team
Local Brent Councillors
Brent Residents

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