



# The Mill

*\*People making things happen*



## Our strategy for 2016-2021

Our **vision** is of a strong local community where people love to live, and know and care for their neighbours.

Our **mission** is to provide a welcoming, positive and inclusive space at the heart of Walthamstow, and work with the community locally to make things happen.

Our **values** - We believe that everyone has a role to play and skills to share. We believe we're stronger together, and we trust that as a community we can shape our future and develop our potential. We believe in the power of creativity to help people see things differently, express themselves and inspire others.

The Mill has grown and developed during our first five years, as the community worked together to provide the space, opportunity and support for people to share their skills, get involved and create friendships. The community around us will see many changes in the next five years, as new pressures and opportunities arise.

We will continue to be a consistent and trusted presence throughout these changes, open to new and creative ways of making things happen together.

## OUR FOCUS

In the next five years we want to make sure as many people as possible are able to get involved in The Mill - especially those who are lonely or isolated.

We will help people make the most of the opportunities we have to offer, and will focus especially on people who live alone, are unemployed, in ill health, or who feel isolated.

# OUR IMPACT

In order to build on our achievements over the past five years, and respond to new challenges, we will focus our attention and resources on the following aims:

# 1

## Getting together

The Mill is a trusted and widely-used resource for the local community.

We are open and accessible to more people, especially those who are isolated.

More people know about The Mill, and come to us to meet their neighbours, learn new things and make their ideas happen.



# 2

## Getting involved

People from across the community have the opportunity to share their skills and time through volunteering.

More local people share their skills and feel confident to act on their ideas.

The Mill is host to a wide range of activities run by and for the community.

We make the most of what we have as a community - growing ideas, sharing knowledge and encouraging action that improves the wellbeing of all.



# 3

## Getting creative

The Mill is a thriving creative hub and more people of all age groups, abilities and backgrounds are encouraged and challenged to be creative.

We provide regular opportunities for people to be creative and showcase their talent through our exhibitions and workshops.

We support creative activities that encourage people to learn new skills, connect with others, and build confidence, especially for those who are isolated.



# 4

## Improving our space

More people are able to make their ideas happen at The Mill because of our improved facilities and building. We make better use of our existing space, and increase the use of our rooms so more people can benefit from a range of activities.

We continue to be a trusted guardian of this loved and valued local space, and we make the most of what the building can do for the community.



## STRONGER COMMUNITIES

We believe that strong and resilient communities can achieve amazing things, and that The Mill helps our community become stronger.

We provide the space for local people to feel connected and support each other.

We provide opportunities for people to have a voice, and champion local priorities. Through volunteering and getting involved in The Mill, local people are making a real difference in the ability of our community to face challenges.



## WELLBEING

We believe that the most important difference we can make to our community is to improve the wellbeing of people in it. We can make an impact to how people feel by giving them the opportunities to improve their wellbeing.

By encouraging people to connect to each other, take notice, keep learning, stay active, and give to each other, they will feel happier, more confident and able to live fulfilling lives.

## PROVE AND IMPROVE

In order to protect and build our reputation it is important that we understand and demonstrate the impact we have. We will work together to measure our impact and provide the support and skills to help group leaders to do the same.

We will celebrate our successes, as well as learn when things go wrong. We will do this to strengthen our local community's awareness of us and confidence in us, as well as that of our wider networks, potential supporters and funders.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

To achieve these impacts we need to reach out and work with others:

## Building on our strengths

We are sustained and strengthened by all the people who make up The Mill - especially our wonderful volunteers. We will support our volunteers and group leaders to make their ideas happen.

## Wider connections

We will be better able to achieve our aims and serve the community if we work in partnership with others. By working with groups across our local area we can share ideas, skills and resources - making us more resilient and able to take up new opportunities.

We will reach out to make new connections with partners, funders and organisations who will help us meet our vision.

## Securing our future

It is essential we make the best use of our resources for the community. We will live within our means and aim to grow and diversify our income to achieve our aims.

As part of this we will continue to have a management structure that supports and provides good governance for our assets and activities.

## Get in touch!

The Mill relies on the time, experience and skills of local people to make things happen. If you want to help us achieve the aims set out in this strategy, please get in touch - we'd love to hear your ideas!

 @themille17

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