



The Mill

**People making things happen*



Our 10 Year Strategy 2023 - 2033

*Working together for a resilient,
thriving community*

This document summarises The Mill's 10 year strategy. In it, we describe **who we are, what we're trying to do and the way we work**. It also includes **the impact we make** across three focus areas, **our organisational plan** with five main priorities, and our four **core organisational values**.

Who we are & what we want to achieve

The Mill is a community centre based in Walthamstow. The space is a much-loved former library building, rescued by people in the local area through a grassroots campaign.

Every week, The Mill is full of people getting together to share interests like crafts, languages and social activities, or just dropping in to enjoy a hot drink, relax in our friendly living room, and use our library and children's play area.

Our vision is of a resilient, thriving community, and our mission is to provide a welcoming, positive and inclusive space at the heart of the area. We work as part of the whole community to **make things happen**.

People make The Mill

The Mill exists because people in the local community decided they wanted to save a space that meant something to them.

Anyone can suggest and run activities, and participate in our work. Our small staff team and volunteers exist to support activities led by the community, for the community.



Vision & Impact

Our vision sits at the heart of everything we do. **Three impact areas** sit around this vision, reflecting the most important results of our work in supporting people to make things happen.

This guides the activities, groups and events we have at The Mill, ensuring that they benefit and serve our community whilst creating impact in the long-term. Here are some examples that show how this is practically achieved.



"I've met people from all different backgrounds and walks of life. This works so well in our group, adding a richness to discussions and an opportunity to understand and consider different perspectives."

Jenny M, The Mill Book Club Group Leader




"Being a volunteer brings mutual benefit. I feel I am contributing to the well-being of all who visit and use The Mill - and just as importantly, my involvement with The Mill contributes greatly to my own well-being"

Sue G, Volunteer



"Throughout my life I've struggled with shyness. But in the last few years I've come out of my shell. I've gained more confidence. With everyone here being so friendly I feel like I'm with family."

Janet B, Reception Volunteer




Our Plan

Five areas we will prioritise for development 2023-33:

1 Build a strong, representative network of local connections

The Mill has always benefitted from working in partnership with like minded organisations, community groups and our diverse community. We will continue to develop these partnerships, our wider connections, and our ability to mobilise a strong collective response to the community's challenges, inclusive of all.

2 Clearer and more meaningful communications

The Mill makes a positive difference to people and the community every day in multiple different ways, but we can always improve how many people know about what we do, and what we offer. We will develop the way we share the story of our work and our amazing community, and communicate the impact that we have.

3 Strengthen and grow a diverse volunteer community

At the core of everything we do is an amazing community of volunteers, who create and run activities, and keep every part of the organisation running. We will grow and diversify this community so it is representative of our area, working with volunteers to harness and develop their skills and talents and create opportunities for participation, including in decision making at The Mill.

4 Improve our building

The Mill's building needs investment to continue to serve the needs of our diverse community for the long term. Our 'Build The Mill' refurbishment project will make improvements to accessibility, environmental impact, facilities and space, enhancing The Mill, while keeping it affordable and welcoming.

5 Prove and improve

Alongside our other priorities, we want to develop our approach to capturing how our way of working makes a difference and creates impact for our people and the community. Identifying what works and what doesn't, we will use this knowledge to improve and embed a culture of curiosity and learning into our work so we can get better at what we do and respond to external changes.



Our Values

People make The Mill - Individuals from all ages, backgrounds and cultures bring unique capacities and passions, and we are here to provide the space and support to make their ideas happen. We are part of a vibrant, diverse and thriving community in which people identify and overcome challenges, making the most of opportunities together. We work with local people and partners because we are stronger together.



We are inclusive and supportive - We want to tackle social exclusion through drawing on the diverse wealth of knowledge and experience our community offers. Together we can work towards an inclusive future for us all. We are proud of our open and inviting space, and believe kindness, compassion and respect for everyone coming to and involved in The Mill is fundamental to this. Our focus is particularly on those members of our community who are lonely or isolated.

We are imaginative and creative - Always open to new ideas and doing things differently, we want everyone who comes into The Mill to feel included and be able to express themselves and their ideas in their own individual and unique ways, freely and safely in a non-judgemental atmosphere.




We care for our local environment - Everyone involved in The Mill can play their part in reducing our environmental impact. No matter how small the action, it is worth the effort. We will take an active role in encouraging and supporting people to find local solutions to the climate crisis. We also view our building as a vital community asset and we work with our community and partners to take responsibility for its carbon footprint.

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