



# **iMPACT RePORT 2024**



**Baby things,  
big impact.**



# executive SUMMARY



As we reflect on another year at Little Village, we're so proud to share the impact we've made together. This report shows what your support has made possible – helping families across London feel seen, supported, and equipped with the essentials they need in the face of rising hardship.

At Little Village, we make a big difference to families, in many individual ways, every single day. But we also know that the power of support goes beyond these distinct moments. By sharing essential items, fostering connections, and helping families access further support, we create a powerful and self-sustaining ripple effect – rooted in connection, partnership, and a personalised approach.

Encouraged by their encounters with us, families step up to keep this momentum going – extending the reuse chain by passing on items they no longer need, sharing their knowledge about the support available to families, and giving their time back to the community as volunteers.

This cycle of sharing, reusing, and connecting is the real key to lasting

change through a sustainable support ecosystem. It ensures that more children get the essentials they need to thrive, while strengthening communities, supporting our volunteers and partners, and benefiting the planet.

## Providing families with essential items

In 2024, we responded to 6,660 requests for family support, covering 7,325 individual children in need. In fact, many of these families needed our help on more than one occasion, which means that, collectively, children were supported 9,269 times throughout the year.

This year, the essential items you gifted for us to pass on to other families would be worth over **£3 million** if valued new.

They provided:

- 1,551 safe places for children and babies to sleep, including Moses baskets, cots, and toddler beds.
- 2,218 ways for families to get to medical appointments, meet up with friends, or have fun outside – including 1,189 buggies, plus slings, scooters, and buggy boards for big brothers and sisters.
- 6,752 coats, so that children can stay warm, snug, and dry.
- 14,163 pairs of shoes, so that children can make strides in well-fitting and weather-appropriate footwear.
- 549 highchairs, so that parents can feed their children safely.
- 886 infant baths or bath supports, so that parents can bathe their children safely, and make bathtimes fun.
- 17,499 books, to stimulate children's learning, development, and sense of adventure.
- 18,675 toys, giving children hours of fun and letting their imaginations grow.

Some of these items are small, others larger – but they are all essentials, and they all made a big difference to the lives of the families who receive them. This was confirmed by 92% of families we surveyed, who told us that our gifts meant they could

spend money on other things their family desperately needed.

And the impact doesn't stop there. Here are some of the main ways that families say receiving essential items from our baby banks made a difference to their lives:

1. Families have the essential items they need for their children.
2. Children thrive as a result of items that support their development and help families get about outside their home.
3. Families are less burdened financially.
4. Families are less burdened emotionally, feeling more confident and less anxious.

## Partnerships

In 2024, we fulfilled 6,660 referrals through three tailored partnership models – including one brand new and one emerging initiative – each designed to meet different community needs. These strategic partnerships meant we could provide even more essential items to more families, while strengthening the overall support ecosystem. Specifically, over the last year we have fulfilled:

- 4,540 referrals from our regular partners, helping these professionals build trust with the families they work with;

- 1,635 Bundles in Partnership at community groups, unlocking access to support for more families and enhancing the services offered by our partners; and
- 485 requests from maternity units – covering 92% of London hospitals – providing emergency packs for newborn babies who have nothing.

## Connections

Through a series of warm, one-to-one conversations, we support families who need help getting help. Whether that is support with money, housing, emotional wellbeing, health, or all of these and more, these valuable connections we build for families create the foundations of their own little village of support – and of real, lasting change.

Our Family Connections Welcome Team spoke to 2,764 families in 2024, ensuring that the items we went on to select for them matched their preferences as well as their needs.

And our Family Connections Follow-up Team reached out to families 4,771 times to provide information about other organisations and services relevant to their needs. Between our Follow-Up Team – who provided individualised signposting in 620 cases – and our Signposting and Guidance

Team – who gave extended help in 417 cases for families with more complex needs – we provided signposting support on 1,037 occasions throughout the year.

Importantly, 77% of the families who used our signposting and guidance service told us they had never accessed this type of help before. This shows how effective this way of working is for reaching families who might otherwise go unsupported – and proves that families who receive essential items from Little Village trust us to go on and help them in other ways.

In 2024, our staff and volunteers issued 212 food bank vouchers, which – together with the help we gave with grant applications, energy bills, and debts – secured or saved families nearly £23,000.

Finally, here are some of the overall impacts from all the work we do to help build connections for the families we support:

1. Families feel heard and understood, by Little Village and by other providers.
2. Families feel empowered to seek guidance.
3. Families know how to access networks of support, and in turn share that information with others.
4. Families' overall circumstances are improved – both immediately and in the longer term.



## Volunteering

At the heart of our “little village” is our dedicated and diverse team of volunteers, who make everything else we do possible. In 2024, our volunteers contributed a total of **31,348 hours**, packing love, passion, and care into every single one.

We’ve introduced a wealth of new roles and opportunities in 2024, welcoming **146 one-off volunteers (700+ hours) and 99 corporate groups (3,900 hours)**. When our volunteers thrive, so do we – and so do the families we serve. Our volunteers tell us that being part of Little Village has helped them build connections, improved their wellbeing, and boosted their confidence – proving that giving support is just as life-changing as receiving it.

## Environmental impact

In 2024, we gifted families with 128 tonnes worth of items, which may otherwise have ended up in landfill. The carbon emissions saved by reusing rather than discarding this amount of waste is roughly equivalent to taking **124 cars off the road for a year** in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

We have made it even easier to donate pre-loved items over the last year, hosting a total of 137 donation points – both regular and pop-up sites – across the capital.

And by passing on surplus items – facilitated by our new warehouse and a number of important new partnerships – we were able to extend the reuse chain even further beyond Little Village, saving more waste from landfill, and reaching even more families who need essential items.

Finally, as we continue to champion the concepts of reuse and of giving and receiving second-hand items, evidence from families, volunteers, and referral partners suggests that attitudes and behaviour are slowly changing for the better.

We provided  
signposting  
support  
**1,037**  
times



## Raising our voice for change

In 2024, we continued to amplify awareness of family poverty and the role of baby banks, working with partners to share families’ stories and drive national action. Our media efforts reached millions through the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and national newspapers, while our Winter Warmers campaign secured over 180 regional news features. Our Christmas film gave five mums a chance to describe the big difference Little Village has made to their lives – and was a huge success.

We have continued to push for policy change over the last year, calling for urgent reforms – including scrapping the two-child limit on benefits – and making plans to contribute to the government’s forthcoming Child Poverty Strategy. As well as engaging with MPs, we were pleased to secure further support from the Mayor of London. Not only did the mayor extend our funding, but he also gave a valuable public endorsement of our work.

As co-founders of the Baby Bank Alliance, we are continuing to strengthen the sector; this year the Alliance secured high-profile partnerships with IKEA and ITV’s *Lorraine*, leading to national appeals and additional funding. By the end of 2024, a total of 200 baby banks had joined the Alliance.

## Our Net Promoter Scores

In our 2024 surveys, we asked our families, volunteers, and referral partners how likely they are to recommend Little Village, on a scale of 1–10. Using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) model, we worked out four scores that we can use as numerical reference points for how we’re doing.

Our NPS for 2024 are:

- Families: 79
- Referral Partners: 89
- Bundles in Partnership Partners: 92
- Volunteers: 78

The creators of the NPS methodology suggest that scores can be interpreted as follows:

- above 0 = good
- above 20 = favourable
- above 50 = excellent
- above 80 = world-class

Once again in 2024, our scores come in as “excellent and “world-class” – an amazing result and testimony to the work of everyone in our community.

Conclusion

We want to take a moment to say thank you. Your support has made an incredible difference in 2024 – and we hope you are proud of what these pages show..

Over the past year, Little Village has reached thousands of families, both directly via our hubs, in their homes and

through our partnership programmes, to give children the essentials they need to thrive. We have also deepened our connections with families, recognising that *how* we give support is just as important as the support itself. Families have told us that our caring, personalised approach matters – and we remain committed to making them feel valued, heard, and connected.



Yet a year on from our previous report, the need for Little Village still exists. That's why our impact reports also include a solemn reminder of why we are here and why our work continues to matter. In 2024, demand for support once again exceeded our capacity to respond. No family in the UK should face such hardship – this situation is unacceptable, and we want to **end it**.

So in 2025, we will continue to raise our voice for change, strengthen our partnerships and connections, and keep doing what we do best – providing high-quality, pre-loved essentials so that children can thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. There is much work to do, but together, we can build a future where no child goes without.





# INTRODUCTION

LITTLE  
VILLAGE

Baby things,  
big impact.

We're so proud to share the impact we've made together this year. This report shows what your support has made possible – families across London feeling seen, supported, and equipped with the essentials they need.

Family poverty is still a desperate reality in the UK – particularly in London. We can and will share plenty of facts and figures about this appalling situation, but at Little Village, we also see beyond the numbers. Every day we meet the parents making impossible choices, hear about the worries that keep them up at night, and witness the resilience and love that drive them forwards. This in turn drives us forwards, to work tirelessly – alongside our partners and supporters – to achieve positive change in the face of this crisis.

We hope you too will be inspired by what we've achieved with your help over the last year. But this **2024 Impact Report** is more than a testimony of our work; it is a space to amplify the voices of the families we support. That's why, as we share our results on these pages, you'll hear directly from *them*. In their own words, they will tell you about the difference you – alongside our incredible community of supporters – have made to their lives.

**At the beginning of 2024, we published our new strategy committing to four priority areas where we can make an impact in 2024–2026:**

- **Supporting families:** Continuing to share both essential items and understanding, so that babies and children in London can thrive.
- **Inspiring:** Growing a “village” of support and inspiring more people to join us.
- **Raising awareness:** Raising our voice for change – increasing awareness of family poverty and baby banks, and building a national Baby Bank Alliance.
- **Resilience:** Ensuring the overriding sustainability of this work by developing a strong and resilient organisation.





# THE NEED WE'RE MEETING

We are incredibly proud to share the details of our many positive impacts on people's lives. But we never lose sight of the stark facts that make our work – and the very existence of our organisation – both urgent and necessary.

So before we dive in to look at our impacts, we want to take a moment to highlight the situation that we are responding to, and the reason we exist.

## The deepening crisis of child poverty

In 2024, the landscape of child poverty in London – never an acceptable situation to begin with – reached alarming new heights. Despite being one of the wealthiest cities in the world, the capital's child poverty rates continually outpace the national average, making it the epicentre of this growing crisis. **More than one in three of all children in London are now living in poverty.**

The cost-of-living crisis, exacerbated by inflation, rising housing costs, and stagnant wages, has intensified the struggle for many families. Essentials such as food, heating, and housing have become increasingly unaffordable. Recent

data from the Child Poverty Action Group shows that the cost of raising a child has soared,<sup>2</sup> with even basic living expenses outstripping household income from low-paid employment, and support from welfare benefits unable to bridge the gap.

Of the many children living in poverty in London, over 70% are in households where at least one parent is working. This situation, known as "in-work poverty", reflects the harsh reality that employment is no longer a guarantee against, or a certain route out of, financial hardship.<sup>3</sup> Too often, working parents still have to face the impossible choice of heating their homes or feeding their children.

## The youngest children face the greatest risks

The early years of a child's life are so important for their development, yet many families struggle to provide



## The need we're meeting

even the basic essentials during this critical time. In fact, households with children under five are even more likely to experience poverty than those with older children.<sup>4</sup>

This vulnerability is driven by multiple overlapping factors, from higher childcare costs, to lower earning capacity due to parental leave or reduced working hours, to the ever-increasing costs of clothes, equipment, and other kit associated with caring for babies and toddlers.



### Destitution and the lack of essentials

The problem of poverty is spreading, but it is also deepening. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's latest report reveals that over 1 million children across the UK experienced destitution in 2023 – meaning they lacked such basic necessities as food, clothes, hygiene products, and a safe, warm place to sleep.<sup>5</sup> London has the highest rates of child destitution in the country, with many families living in overcrowded, inadequate housing or facing homelessness.<sup>6</sup>

## The need we're meeting

Another recent report, this time from Barnardo's, highlights the scale of deprivation further, revealing that thousands of children in the UK are forced to sleep on the floor because their families cannot afford a proper bed. And a further one million parents have had to give up their own beds in the last 12 months, so their children had somewhere to sleep.<sup>7</sup> Barnardo's call this "bed poverty", but the crisis extends beyond sleeping arrangements. A child without a safe place to sleep is a child without stability and security – and without the essentials that they need to thrive.

### The long-term consequences

The impacts of poverty on children are profound and far-reaching. These include:<sup>8</sup>

- Educational disadvantage: Children in poverty are less likely to be school-ready at age five, and more likely to achieve lower academic outcomes throughout their education. In 2023/24, a quarter of children who grew up in poverty received grade 5 or above in English and maths at GCSE, compared with 53% of their more affluent peers.<sup>9</sup> This in turn significantly reduces employment opportunities upon leaving education.

**1,551**  
safe places  
to sleep





## The need we're meeting

- **Mental health challenges:** Early exposure to poverty significantly increases the risk of poor mental health, including depression and anxiety. Children from low-income families are four times more likely to experience mental health challenges in both adolescence and adulthood.<sup>10</sup>
- **Health inequities:** Poor nutrition, inadequate housing, and limited access to healthcare all contribute to chronic health issues, both physical and mental, among children who grow up in poverty<sup>11</sup>.
- **Reduced life expectancy:** Children born in the most deprived areas of London face a life expectancy up to nine years shorter than those born in affluent areas.<sup>12</sup>
- **Parental relationship breakdown:** Financial stress can increase pressure on a relationship, making separation more likely. This in turn exacerbates economic hardship, affecting both parents and children.<sup>13</sup>

On top of all the challenges of material deprivation, many parents in this situation also face added distress due to social isolation and stigma.

Research from the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood found that over half of parents in the UK feel lonely, and

this figure is even higher among those experiencing financial hardship.<sup>14</sup>

These parents face all the stress and anxiety of raising children in poverty, without the informal support networks that can be a lifeline in times of crisis.

We reached  
families in  
**32**  
of London's  
33 boroughs



## The need we're meeting

### Why our work matters

Behind all of these statistics and every report – including this one – there are real families and children, doing their best in impossible circumstances. This is their real life. Our work – our very existence – is a direct response to this crisis, and we meet

it every day. But we also *respond* every day, providing essential items, emotional support, and connections to wider services.

And in this way, one family at a time, we not only alleviate immediate hardship but also help build resilience and hope for the future.



# METHODOLOGY

You may be keen to dive into the concrete results of our work over the past year. But we believe that a clear methodology forms the foundation of meaningful impact reporting; so, for those interested in understanding our approach, this section explains *how* we evaluated our work in 2024, and what to bear in mind when interpreting the results.

## How did we measure our impact?

In 2024, we continued our comprehensive, mixed-method approach to measuring our impact, drawing data from seven key sources.

similar demographic information about our volunteers; data around volunteer engagement; and key information about our referral partners.

Since August 2024, we have also been actively monitoring and recording the weight of all donations that enter and exit our new warehouse.

### Ongoing monitoring data

Throughout our daily operations, our case management system captures comprehensive information about our families, volunteers, and referral partners. This includes data like the reasons why families are referred to us; their ages, ethnicities, and languages; and the types of items they select. The system also captures

### Annual surveys

During December 2024 and January 2025, we distributed online surveys to all stakeholders – families, volunteers, and referral partners – who engaged with us throughout 2024. Like last year, each survey in 2024 featured a Net Promoter Score (NPS) question. This





internationally recognised methodology measures satisfaction levels based on how likely an individual is to recommend a service to others. The creators of the NPS, Bain & Company, suggest the following framework for interpreting scores, which can range between -100 and +100:

- above 0 = good
- above 20 = favourable
- above 50 = excellent
- above 80 = world-class

### Signposting and guidance survey

Families who accessed our signposting and guidance services were also invited to complete a brief, voluntary survey, via phone or online, specifically about their experience of this service. This took place in the weeks following the conclusion of their support and provided valuable feedback and insights into the effectiveness of our service.

### Independent research

In 2024, the Greater London Authority (GLA) commissioned an independent study, conducted by Mime Consulting and Wavehill, into the impacts of all services funded through their Advice in Community Settings programme – including our signposting and guidance service. We have incorporated some of the relevant findings from this study into our report.

### In-depth interviews with families

We conducted 13 detailed interviews with parents and carers in December 2024 and January 2025, using purposive sampling to ensure we reached parents with a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. The interviews were entirely voluntary, and participants could choose between telephone or video calls; we also provided interpretation services for two non-English-speaking families who would otherwise not have been able to take part.

### WRAP Benefits of Reuse Tool

We used the Waste and Reuse Action Programme (WRAP) Benefits of Reuse Tool to help quantify our environmental impact.<sup>15</sup> The tool provides a calculation to measure the carbon emissions saved by reusing items that would otherwise have gone to landfill.

### Family stories

We regularly invite families – selected at random – to voluntarily share their experiences in the form of personal stories. These narratives significantly enrich our understanding of impact, and give those who wish to do so a chance to express themselves in their own words. Our emerging and deepening family participation work aims to expand these opportunities for parents and carers to share their experiences.

## A quick note about some limitations of this approach

### Surveys

Response rates varied significantly across our different survey groups, as follows:

- Volunteer survey: 29%
- Family survey: 15%
- Signposting and guidance survey: 17%
- Referral partner survey: 9%
- Emergency Hospital Pack partner survey: 31%
- Bundles in Partnership referrers survey: 41%

This means that while most surveys can be taken as offering a reliable indicator of participants' views, the referral partner survey in particular may not be fully representative, and should be interpreted with some caution. In addition, the Emergency Hospital Pack survey and Bundles in Partnership survey both had a small sample base, which may affect the statistical significance of these results.

When analysing the survey results to create the percentages we mention in this report, we excluded the responses where participants selected "Don't know". This should therefore also be kept in mind when interpreting the results, as it means our percentage figures only represent the

respondents who were willing and able to provide a definitive answer.

### In-depth interviews

We met our sampling quota for the in-depth interviews, achieving the diversity we hoped for. However, it's important to note that the sample may not be fully representative, as we could only capture the views of parents who felt confident about coming forward for interviews. These parents are likely to be more engaged and motivated compared to those who didn't want to participate, meaning we're missing the perspectives of the latter group. This year, we offered interpretation services to reduce barriers for families who don't feel comfortable speaking in English, resulting in two interviews with interpreter support.

### Family stories

The personal narratives included are those of individuals who chose to share their experiences, and typically reflect positive engagement with our services. While valuable in their own right, these stories should be considered alongside our quantitative data for a complete picture of our impact.

## CeCe's STORY

Chantelle has always embraced life with energy and optimism. Known affectionately as “CeCe” to her friends and family, she lives with her husband Shaunn, eldest daughter Zi, and baby daughter Eden Bunni Rose.

In the summer of 2022, CeCe began feeling unusually exhausted and aching. At 42, she thought it might be menopause or the lingering effects of COVID-19. “I genuinely thought I was seriously ill, but it actually turned out I was pregnant!” she shares. Though surprised, CeCe and Shaunn embraced the news with joy and excitement.

However, life was about to throw another curveball. In August 2022, CeCe was made redundant from her job. “It gave me a new lease of life in many ways,” she reflects. CeCe decided to change careers and became a roller-skating coach – a job that brought her immense joy, but left her with a limited income.

Shaunn, a full-time university student pursuing a business honours degree, worked gruelling 12-hour shifts in security to support their growing family. With no maternity pay and increasing financial pressures, CeCe found herself struggling.

Her eldest daughter, Zi, had recently secured a place at the prestigious BRIT School, adding another layer of financial responsibility.

During an appointment with her midwife, CeCe’s emotions finally spilled over. “I burst into tears because of the worry,” she says. Then the midwife introduced her to Little Village.

“The relief I felt was massive,” CeCe recalls. “When I got my first bundle, I was so happy. It just helped me so much, and the way it was all bundled with string and looking all cute was incredibly sweet and made me feel really special.”

One item in particular left CeCe deeply moved. “We were gifted this massive, super cute cuddly teddy bear, Bunny, which was holding a rose. We had named our daughter Eden Bunni Rose – it was such a beautiful touch that showed the level of love they put into my bundle.”

Little Village provided CeCe with everything she needed for her newborn: a cot, bedding, clothing, toys, a steriliser, nappies, wipes, feeding equipment, and even some treats for herself, like face wash and hand cream. “Literally, I received

all the newborn baby essentials that I needed and I just couldn’t believe the love and generosity,” she says.

Some items carried particular sentimental value for CeCe and her family. She recalls, “We even got some amazing ’80s-type toys from my era growing up, which was so special. They also included a toy telephone, which was amazing as we’d just watched Toy Story 3, where a similar toy appears. No-one at Little Village would have known, but things like that just made the whole thing feel so perfect.”

CeCe admits she initially felt ashamed to ask for help, but those feelings quickly dissipated: “From the very first phone call, Little Village were so welcoming. Having the knowledge that Little Village is there for my family if we need it makes me feel safe and comforted.”

Looking ahead, CeCe hopes to give back: “The fact that I can donate to Little Village in the future is brilliant and help other families who might find themselves in a similar position to what we found ourselves in.”





# OUR FAMILIES

*"I am still struggling financially, especially with the costs of nappies and milk powder for my infant."*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey



For many families, every day brings impossible choices. Like the **66%** of parents who have to prioritise housing costs over buying essentials like clothing and toys, and the **45%** who skip meals so their children have enough to eat. Or the **26%** who ration nappies to make a pack last longer, and the **9%** who even have to water down their babies' formula to stretch it further.

These are harrowing realities; no parent should have to make these choices.

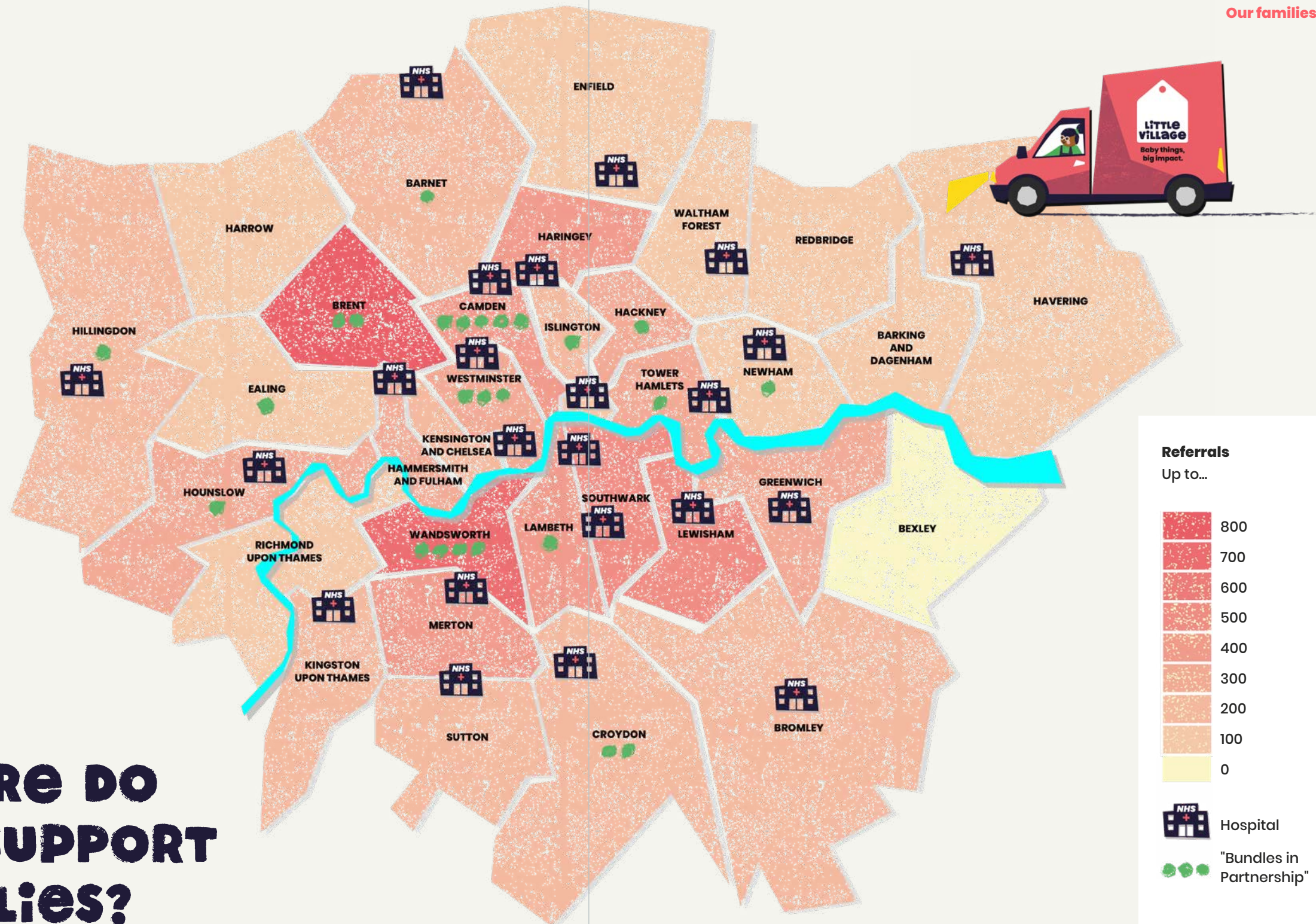
When we surveyed the families we work with, **47%** told us that, without Little Village, they would have had to go without essential items – while **40%** would have had to borrow money or go into debt. And alarmingly, nearly half (**46%**) said they actually don't know what they would have done. This is heartbreaking.

Every family supported by Little Village shares the experience of raising young children in London while facing financial hardship. But their individual stories and backgrounds are often very different. Our referral partners provide us with important information about the kind of support

each individual family needs from us, and also about *why* they need our help. Having this fuller picture of each family's circumstances means we can tailor our support to their needs – and because our referral partners have shared this information with us, families don't need to repeat distressing details about their circumstances unless they want to.

Over the page (**Figure 1**), you'll see where we support families, including newborns arriving in hospital with nothing warm to wear or no nappies of their own, and children we've supported through our community partners. We've been there for families in 32 of London's 33 boroughs – making sure they have what they need, where they need it.



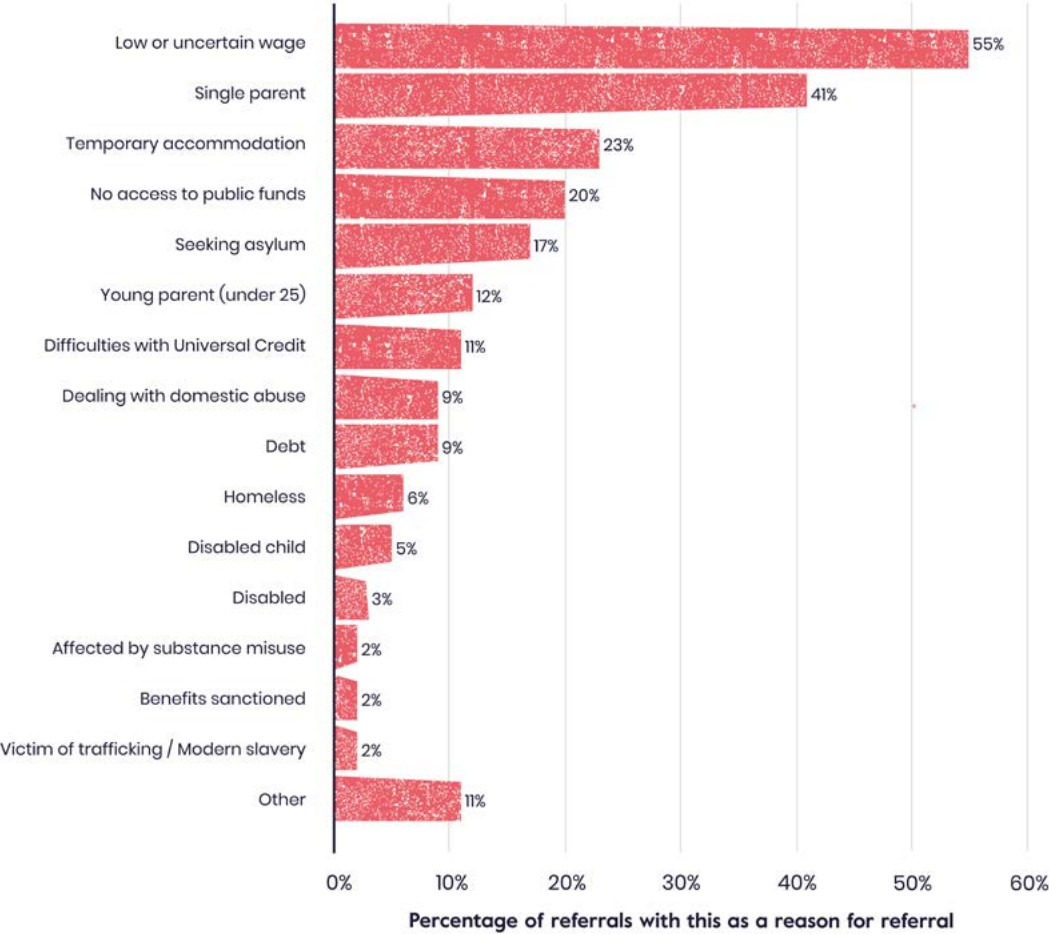


**Figure 1**

# WHERE DO WE SUPPORT FAMILIES?



Figure 2: Why are families referred to us?



**Notes** Figures derived from 4,540 referrals completed via our online referral form. The form allows for multiple referral reasons to be selected where applicable. These figures apply to regular online referrals only – referrals from Bundles in Partnership groups or hospitals are not included.

Figure 3: Families' ethnicity

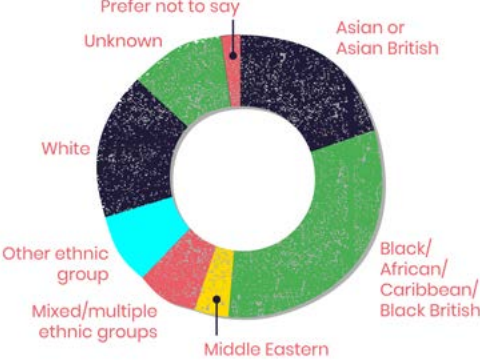
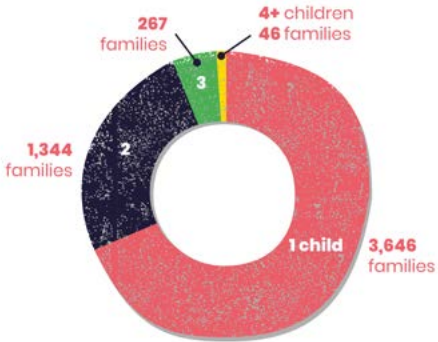


Figure 4: How many children under 5 do our families have?

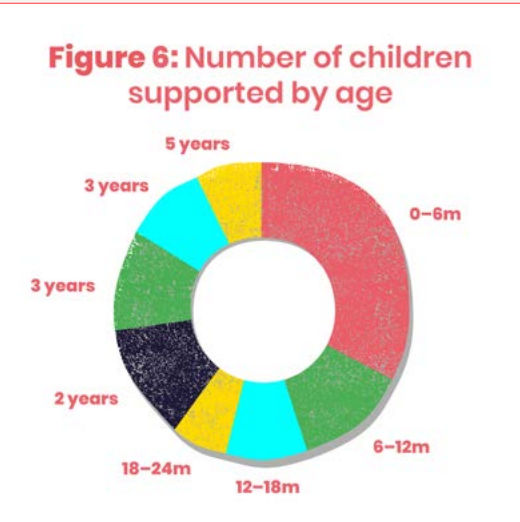
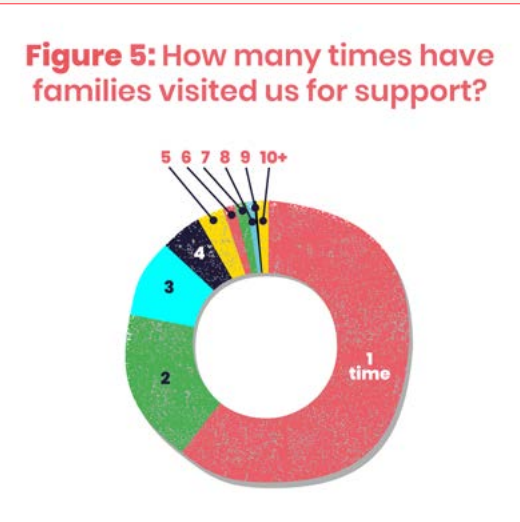


For this Impact Report, we have also used this information, completely anonymised, to put together some demographic and social insights into the families we support. **Figures 1, 2, and 3** show, respectively: where our families live; the reasons why families are referred to us; and their ethnicities.

We also know that having multiple young children can add extra pressures – and this is reflected among the families we meet. As you can see in **Figure 4**, 31% of the families we supported in 2024 had more than one child under five.

**ONE MILLION CHILDREN**  
across the UK experienced destitution in 2023





Some families only require a one-off bundle of essentials to help them through a tough moment, or a single kind and respectful conversation to connect them to further support.

Others need more ongoing help – this year, 39% of the families we supported had received help from Little Village before (see **Figure 5**).

We're here for families with young children up to the age of five, but we know that those first few months can be especially tough. With so much to buy at once, the costs quickly add up. This, combined with our support for newborns in maternity units across London, means that last year one-third of the children we supported were under six months old (see **Figure 6**).

**100% OF FAMILIES** felt the support they were given by the Signposting team helped relieve financial pressures







# THE FIVE WAYS WE WORK

## Providing families with essential items

### 1. Providing families with essential items

In 2024, we responded to 6,660 requests for family support, covering 7,325 individual children in need. In fact, many of these families needed our help on more than one occasion, which means that, collectively, children were supported 9,269 times throughout the year, despite the loss of a site that had packed over 2,000 referrals the year before ([see page 47](#)). And, as always, at the core of what we do and how we help is the provision of essential items to families who need them.

In 2024, we developed innovative new partnership models to reach even more families, delivering over 2,000 of our bundles to families in a hospital or a local community setting ([see page 43](#)).

Just like last year, we couldn't have achieved any of this without your generous donations of high-quality, pre-loved kit.

This year, the essential items you gifted for us to pass on to other families would be worth over £3 million if valued new.

They provided:

- 1,551 safe places for children and babies to sleep, including Moses baskets, cots, and toddler beds.
- 2,218 ways for families to get out of the house – to attend medical appointments, meet up with friends, and have fun outside. This year, these items included 1,189 buggies, as well as slings, scooters, and buggy boards for big brothers and sisters.
- 6,752 coats, so that children can stay snug and dry.
- 14,163 pairs of shoes, so that children can make strides in well-fitting and weather-appropriate footwear.
- 549 highchairs, so that parents can feed their children safely.
- 886 infant baths or bath supports, so that parents can bathe their children safely, and make bathtimes fun.
- 17,499 books, to stimulate children's learning, development, and sense of adventure.
- 18,675 toys, giving children hours of fun and letting their imaginations grow.

## What impact has this had on families?

In this section, we share some of the most significant impacts from our provision of essential items in 2024. Everything you read here is based on what families have told us in their own words through our surveys and interviews.

*“Being a first-time parent who suffers with mental health issues, having the support of Little Village has made such a positive impact on my life. I really don’t know what I would have done without them.”*

— Family; survey

# 92% OF FAMILIES

said our gifts meant they could spend money on other things they desperately needed



## Impact 1

### Families have the essential items they need for their children

The families we surveyed told us that each essential item they received from Little Village helped them and their children in multiple, overlapping ways. Here are some of the vital impacts these parents mentioned:

- Staying warm and dry (57%): Items like clothing and coats made a significant difference to their children’s comfort and wellbeing.
- Safety (59%): Many items helped keep their children safe, particularly essential kit like stairgates, as well as cots and other sleeping equipment.
- Development and education (46%): Items such as toys and books helped with their children’s stimulation, engagement, and education.
- Getting out and about (23%): Different pieces of kit, from buggies to outdoor clothing and footwear, helped their children enjoy activities outside the house, including at nursery, children’s centres, and groups.
- Better sleep (28%): Safe and comfortable sleeping equipment helped improve rest for the whole family.

## Impact 2

### Children thrive

Making sure that children thrive is our most important long-term impact. And we know that the items families receive are helping to achieve this, because they tell us. Here are some of the specific ways parents feel we are supporting their children to thrive:

### Families are better able to leave their home

Having the right clothing, buggies, and other transport essentials makes a huge difference to parents’ ability to get out of the house – meaning they can benefit from fresh air, connect with their communities, and access support. In our survey, **32% of parents told us that receiving items from Little Village made them feel more confident about getting out and about with their children.**

For many families, the simple ability to take their child outside can transform their daily lives. One mum, whose child was large for their age and had a developmental delay, told us how difficult it used to be for them to get out of their tiny room. Receiving a buggy from Little Village made all the difference, giving them the chance to step outdoors safely and easily. She told us, *“I use it to go everywhere – to the children’s centre, playgroup, food bank, and shopping. Everywhere.”*

— Family; interview

This year, one of the most frequent requests we received from families was for clothing. One mum whose family had fled Ukraine with only the clothes they were wearing told us, *“[her daughter] was wearing the jacket that we came with from Ukraine, but it was not a winter jacket. So now she’s got the warm jacket for the winter and she wears it all the time when we go to nursery or when we go out.”*

— Family; interview

Another mum explained that she only had three items of clothing when she arrived at Home Office accommodation with her two-year old. There was no washing machine, and she had no money to buy clothes. In her words: *“I don’t know what I would have done without a delivery from Little Village.”*

— Family; interview

Little Village was able to help these mothers – and many more like them – by providing the clothes and other essential items they needed for their children.

*“Without Little Village, a lot of families would have nowhere for their babies to sleep, and wouldn’t be able to leave home with their children. Thank you for the amazing and essential work you do.”*

— Referral partner, survey



Another mum told us: *“When we received a scooter, we started going out more as a family. It gave us back the joy of being together outside and watching our kids play.”*

— Parent; interview

And a mum with four children described her joy upon receiving a buggy that meant she could drop her children off at school and nursery more easily: *“The stroller was just amazing ... I can take them wherever, in the bus. It’s been over a year now and I’m still using it. I think when I’m done I will give it to someone as it’s still nice.”*

— Parent; interview

*“I got a variety of different items suitable for each stage of her growth. Sometimes toys made a sound and the colours of the books helped.”*

— Parent; interview



### Items we provide support development

Toys, books, and the items that help a child conquer their next stage of development – such as equipment for weaning or toilet training – are all essential when it comes to helping children thrive. In our survey, 83% of our professional referrers agreed that our work supports child development, and 46% of families specifically noted that the books and toys they received from us helped their child feel stimulated and engaged, or helped them learn.

One mum, who fled war with her child and arrived in the UK with only the clothes they were wearing, told us about how the toys and books they received were particularly helpful to them: *“We received puzzles, so this is the first time for her to start putting together puzzles. We started to read books in English, she started to learn a new language because she never spoke English. I think it made a difference.”*

— Parent; interview

Another mum spoke about how her non-verbal daughter loved a toy she received because it meant she didn’t have to ask when she wanted to hear a story: *“[Little Village] gave a small tablet – you just press it and it tells a story, a fairytale.”*

— Parent; interview

And other families mentioned how helpful it is to receive toys and books that match their children’s changing interests and needs. *“There’s less worry for me being able*

*to adapt to her learning environment; like I said as they grow they need different toys and have different ways of learning.”*

— Parent; interview

### Impact 3 Families are less burdened financially and experience fewer difficult spending choices

Financial hardship forces many parents to make impossible choices. Choices no one should ever have to make – like whether to spend on food, or rent, or clothes for their children, because there isn’t enough money for everything. In the words of a parent we supported: *“Life is not easy and I don’t have enough money for things for my children. You helped with food [foodbank voucher] and with clothes for my children.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

As 92% of families told us, receiving our gifts of essential items for their children meant they could spend money on other things their family needed. And 91% of our families said that they would have seriously struggled to pay core costs like bills and food if they’d had to buy the items we gifted them. One of these parents, a mum of four boys, told us: *“The money I would have used to spend on clothing, stroller, even games, I can*

*use for other things for the family: bills – electricity and council tax – food from the market, or even trips with the kids.”*

— Parent; interview

This was confirmed by the referral partners we surveyed, with 87% agreeing that accessing Little Village meant families could afford to pay for other needs like food and bills, and 90% noting that Little Village provided essential items they hadn’t been able to source anywhere else for families.

Referrers understand and appreciate the depth of our impact on relieving families’ financial burdens. As one put it: *“The impact of Little Village’s work extends far beyond the material items they provide – they are helping to break cycles of poverty and ensuring that children have the basic necessities they need to thrive. Their service is truly essential to the wellbeing of London’s families in need.”*

— Referral partner; survey

*“When I had my baby I didn’t have anything. I went into the hospital with nothing. [Support from Little Village] saved me a fortune. I wouldn’t have been able to provide if I had to buy those things with my own money.”*

— Parent; interview

Impact 4  
Families are less  
burdened emotionally

This is another impact that families feel in a number of overlapping ways:

Families feel less anxious and  
more confident

The stress of providing for young children can be overwhelming.

Half of families tell us that they are excited for their child or children, and some who are expecting their first child (16%) do feel positive about becoming a parent or carer. But all too often, parents feel anxiety and worry about how they will provide for their children.

*“Little Village is an invaluable service to families who can’t afford the basics for their new baby. It considerably reduces the stress felt by pregnant women as they don’t have to worry about not having anything. This enables women to look forward to their baby’s birth knowing that they will be supported. It gives back dignity in situations where dignity is lost due to difficult circumstances.”*

— Referral partner; survey

Here are some of the specific feelings and worries parents tell us that they faced before being referred to Little Village:

Before receiving support from Little Village I felt...	
Anxious about how I was going to provide for my child/children	33%
Sad that I didn’t have everything I needed for my child/children	32%
Worried about my child/children’s future	22%
In a bad place with my mental health	13%
Hopeless	11%
Worried that social services or another agency would feel I wasn’t looking after my child/children well	5%
Respondents could choose multiple options.	

But families tell us that, after they receive our help, their feelings change overwhelmingly for the better. Here are some of the specific ways families told us their feelings improved:

My experience with Little Village...	
Reduced my worry and anxiety	54%
Helped me feel more confident as a parent/carers	42%
Gave me “head-space” to think about other things	36%
Made me feel more confident about asking for help from other people or organisations	36%
Made me feel more confident about getting out with my child/children	32%
Respondents could choose multiple options.	

*“Little Village doesn’t just provide items – it provides breathing space for families in crisis. When parents know their child will have warm clothes and essential items, they can focus on other crucial needs like paying for heating or food. The quality of items means families don’t have to worry about replacements for many months.”*

— Referral partner; survey

And here is how one parent described the relief they felt when this anxiety was lifted: *“With the support and help from Little Village, they made motherhood exciting, simple, and less stressful.”*

— Family; survey

For another parent, it was even simpler: *“I felt happy when I received your support.”*

— Family; survey

Parenting while struggling financially is mentally exhausting. For many, this emotional relief was just as impactful as the items themselves. In the words of a few more of our families:

*“Until they delivered the stuff I couldn’t believe it, there was a lot of stuff that was very useful ... They sent clothes, toys, everything, a bath for the baby, everything I needed for the baby. That was a big relief for me.”*

— Parent; interview



*"I am very happy to say that Little Village really reduces my worry about my baby clothes and toys."*

— Family; survey

*"[Worried] was the way I was feeling. I didn't have money to buy essential items, let alone the items that were non essentials. I didn't know who to turn to and, and I went [to Little Village] but I wasn't expecting them to provide me with so many items."*

— Family; interview

Our referral partners agree too, with 92% confirming that the families they work with had benefited from reduced anxiety and stress since receiving items from Little Village. As one put it:

*"When I tell families about Little Village, I can see the relief on their faces. One mother broke down in tears when she received her parcel – not just because of the items, which were beautiful, but because she felt seen and supported. It's transformed how some families engage with our other services because they trust that we can actually help them."*

— Referral partner; survey

### Families feel supported

At Little Village, families receive more than just essential items – they experience a profound sense of support, dignity, and kindness. An overwhelming 92% of families told us that the emotional support they received from our staff and volunteers

was important or very important to them. This reassurance and care has an impact beyond the provision of material aid; it offers parents a much-needed sense of relief and belonging. In the words of one parent: *"We know someone is caring about us. It gives me courage."*

— Family; interview

Every family is unique. That's why, when we work with families, we tailor our support to their individual needs – so each "package" of support differs from family to family. In the same way, the impact on each family – and the specific ways in which they leave their encounters with us feeling supported – depend on their individual circumstances. But some common themes came up again and again in our surveys and interviews.

*"After fleeing domestic violence, I was overwhelmed and uncertain about how to provide for [my daughter]. Little Village stepped in with kindness and dignity, ensuring we had essential items that made all the difference. Their support not only met our immediate needs but also gave me hope and strength to rebuild our lives."*

— Family; survey



*"Little Village was a lifeline for my daughter and me. I never felt ashamed to ask [them] for help."*

— Family; survey

*"The items were so useful, but most of all, it was the feeling that someone really wants to help me and my family."*

— Family; survey

Another thing that families often share with us is how much they value the presentation and high overall quality of the items we gift them. Even the smallest details – like how their goods are packed and presented – make them feel really valued and cared for. In the words of one parent: *"The lady who packed my package did it with love and care – it really meant a lot."*

— Family; survey

In fact, this reflects another common theme in the feedback we hear from families – parents really notice and appreciate the care and thought that goes into selecting their items. When a new family is referred to us, and will be receiving a delivery rather than attending a hub, we carry out a welcome call where we chat to them about what they need. But we also make sure to ask about their preferences – their favourite colours, for example, or their child's favourite toy or character – and our volunteers use these insights when packing up that family's bundle.

For 42% of parents, for example, the essential items we gifted created a real sense of joy and pride, from seeing their children look well-dressed and cared for. These parents told us: *"People are always asking me 'this outfit looks nice, it looks nice on them' and I can say 'thank you'."*

— Family; interview

And as another put it, *"Going out and dressing them properly with nice shoes is a new mum's dream."*

— Family; interview

Parents also appreciate how our support is always completely judgement-free. Because we understand that asking for help can be difficult, we work hard to make Little Village a warm space, where parents feel respected, valued, and understood. Families consistently tell us that – beyond the essential items they receive – it is the kindness and care of our volunteers that leaves the biggest impact. Here again are some of our families' own words:

*"For our families, the items can have an enormous impact, and I especially like how they allow families to choose their items. It's empowering and allows families, who are often dealing with extreme hardship, to feel they have control over something in their lives."*

— Referral partner; survey

Here are some of the other things families shared with us about their experience of receiving items from Little Village, either through a bundle packed and delivered to them, or chosen themselves in one of our London hubs:

*“It is beautiful that you presented it like a shop so you get a feeling of purchasing items and not just being given items.”*

— Family; survey

*“I did receive really amazing things – things that I probably would have picked out myself. And I was even given things I hadn’t even thought about, obviously becoming a first-time mum.”*

— Family; interview

Ultimately, the impact of giving essential items goes beyond fulfilling a family’s immediate needs, be they for material

assistance or emotional support. For many families, receiving the right essentials at the right time is also a pathway to independence and community connection, giving parents the space and strength to start feeling pride and hope. In the words of one mum we spoke with:

*“I’m getting to a stage where I soon won’t need more help. That’s what I’m working towards now. Instead I will be of help to people.”*

— Family; interview

And finally, one of the strongest indicators of our impact is whether parents are happy to recommend us to others. We are incredibly proud that our families gave Little Village a Net Promoter Score of 79, which is considered “excellent” according to the creators of the methodology ([see pages 19–20](#)).



## Provision through partnership

### Little Village’s referral partnership programmes

*“We witness firsthand how Little Village’s support transforms lives. Their responsiveness, understanding, and commitment to helping families in crisis make them an indispensable resource in our community. The quality of items they provide and their respectful approach to supporting families in need sets them apart as an organisation.”*

— Referral partner; survey

Last year, we told you about our plans to grow our village through partnerships. This became even more vital in 2024, with the loss of a key Little Village packing site ([see page 47](#)) meaning we needed to find new ways of reaching as many families as we possibly can.

Now, thanks to partnerships we have developed throughout 2024, we are able to offer emergency newborn bundles to all of London’s maternity units, as well as bespoke bundles to parent support groups and children’s centres across the city.

In this section, we want to tell you about three specific partnership models we are now operating – our original, core service based on professional referrals, plus two new models we have recently developed. Importantly, each is designed

to meet different community needs and circumstances. Through these partnerships, we fulfilled 6,660 referrals – not only providing essential items, but also strengthening local support networks. As well as amplifying our own offer, this way of working enhances the services of our partner organisations and community groups – meaning we can collectively reach more families, and provide better support.

#### Model 1: Regular referral partnerships

At the heart of our work are the referrals we receive from our regular, longstanding partners – professionals such as midwives, health visitors, social workers, children’s centre staff, and community organisations like foodbanks. Last year, we fulfilled 4,540 referrals through these channels, sending out 2,707 bundles direct to families – all carefully selected and packed with love – and welcoming 1,833 visitors to choose their own items from our shops.

Our partners refer families to us time and again, because they know they can count on us. And they consistently praise the quality and impact of the service families receive from us. As one professional



referrer told us: *“It is a lifeline service. When I refer a family to Little Village, I know they will receive good quality items that will make a real difference to their lives.”*

— Referral partner; survey

Referrers also appreciate how our work supports and enhances their own services. For example, referring families to us can help providers reduce demand for their own over-stretched resources – like in the case of this foodbank partner, who told us: *“Being able to refer to Little Village means we can help our clients minimise costs and reduce their need for using a foodbank.”*

— Referral partner; survey

Being able to refer families to a service like ours also helps strengthen our partners’ own relationships with the families they support – in our survey, 92% told us that referring a family to Little Village helps build trust with them in their own work.

Overall, 92% of referrers told us that Little Village helps them to fulfil the objectives of their own service – and gave us a Net Promoter Score of 89, which is considered a “world-class” result ([see pages 19–20](#)).

### Model 2: Bundles in Partnership (BIP)

In 2022, we began working more closely with a long-standing partner that ran specialist support groups dedicated to helping parents. As the group worked with so many parents needing support, they were unable to complete referral requests for all, and some families risked being missed.

To help, we suggested a new approach. Instead of handling individual referrals, our partner could place group orders for the children attending their group, requesting clothing, shoes, coats, nappies, and age-appropriate toys and books. We would then prepare bundles for each child in easy-to-carry bags, ensuring every family received what they needed. It was a huge success.

Now known as “Bundles in Partnership”, or the BIP programme, this initiative has scaled to reach even more partners and provide bundles to even more families. It currently covers 26 community groups across 15 London boroughs. In 2024, we helped to fulfil 1,635 referrals through the programme, supporting 1,570 children across 1,219 families.

The BIP programme has been particularly effective for families in the most extreme need – such as asylum-seeking families and those with no recourse to public funds. It delivers vital support, in trusted community spaces, to families who would otherwise be at high risk of falling through the cracks.

### Impact: Unlocks trust and access to support

The BIP programme has also turned out to be a powerful way of engaging families who do not normally access support services, for a variety of reasons, with the wider support ecosystem. The evidence for this is compelling – **100% of referral partners in our survey reported that families who receive BIP bundles are more likely to go on to access other support services they offer, and 100% saw increased regular attendance and engagement as a result of this partnership.**

*“Families are grateful for the support. They feel seen, and they know others care. They build some trust with others and open up to further support we may be able to offer.”*

— BIP partner; survey

*“Our families struggle financially, and I feel that because [Little Village] are working with the family hubs, families find it easier and more comfortable to access.”*

— BIP partner; survey

### Impact: Strengthens partner services

Just like our core, regular referrers, working with Little Village through the BIP programme aligns with and enhances our partners’ own services. In our survey, 100% of partners said they found the programme helpful because being able to request bundles in bulk reduces their admin burden, while 75% told us that Little Village provides items they can’t source anywhere else.

*“Families have expressed that this small gesture has a massive impact on their lives.”*

— BIP partner; survey

*“Families are always grateful to receive your bundles; it helps them to reduce the stress they already experience.”*

— BIP partner; survey

Here are some more statistics from our surveys and interviews, showing some of the specific impacts that BIP partners have reported seeing on their services and the families they work with:

- 100% of partners agree that receiving a bundle: reduces families’ anxiety and stress; helps parents feel supported; aids child development; and reduces the need for public money to be spent on essential items.
- 79% say that receiving a bundle from Little Village helps build trust with their families.
- 91% agree that being able to request multiple bundles at once helped them serve their community more effectively.
- 25% have noticed that new families are attending their groups in order to access the BIP bundles.

And finally, we are incredibly proud to report that our BIP referral partners gave us a Net Promoter Score of 92 – another “world-class” result.

Model 3: Emergency hospital packs

We first piloted our “emergency hospital packs” in 2023, in response to a growing number of urgent requests we were receiving from maternity units. This revealed a stark and sad reality: a shocking number of mums, about to give or recently given birth, have none of the items they need to care for their new babies.

Deciding to tackle this proactively, we began to seek out partnerships with midwives and labour wards, so that we could provide essential items in advance – and help prevent families from reaching crisis point.

After a successful pilot, we officially launched our emergency hospital packs in 2024. These vital packs, including sleepsuits, blankets, muslins, and nappies, are available to families in need at every maternity unit in London. So far, we have delivered 485 packs for newborns across 23 London hospitals (representing 92% of all hospitals in the capital).

Busy midwives and other hospital-based professionals who support new parents in crisis have welcomed this programme, rating its helpfulness at 9 out of 10 in our survey. Here are some of the specific things they like about our emergency hospital packs:

- Lessened my/our workload – 36%
- Helped us to build trust with families – 72%

- Provided items we couldn’t source elsewhere – 55%
- Helped fulfil the objectives of our service – 55%
- Reduced the need for hospital funds to be spent on essential items for newborns – 36%

Most importantly, the packs have made a huge impact on the lives of families in crisis. Giving birth can be a vulnerable time for every parent, but those we support through this initiative – many of whom are under the age of 25 – are already facing some of society’s cruellest challenges, including:

- lack of permanent accommodation;
- no recourse to public funds;
- domestic abuse; and
- seeking asylum.

*“To be able to provide vulnerable and needy families with the most basic of things has been received with huge gratitude, and has helped build positive trusting relationships between the service and families we are supporting.”*

— Hospital partner; survey

The packs have become an integral part of emergency provision in the majority of London hospitals – and, as with all our services, the benefits for families go well beyond the immediate material support.

Operational challenges

In 2024, we faced a significant challenge with the loss of our Hounslow packing site – which in 2023 had fulfilled over 2,000 requests for support.

Determined to bridge the gap and continue to reach all the families who need us, we have worked tirelessly over the last year to drive efficiencies, including through strategic partnerships.

Through a new space for our Camden hub, improved warehouse operations, additional shifts, and enhanced partnership programmes to reach families in their communities, we have worked to maximise our impact in the face of the loss of the Hounslow site.

And our efforts have led to some remarkable results, with both Tooting and Camden hubs fulfilling around **50% more** referrals compared to the previous year. In fact, as Figure 7 shows, all three hubs ultimately supported more families than they had ever supported from their respective sites before.

These figures show just how vital our logistics, warehouse support, and partnerships are in reaching families – making sure that these essential bundles get to children, even when space is tight. By strengthening our operations and staying adaptable, we make sure as many children as possible receive the essentials they need, where they need them.

Hub	2023	2024	Difference	% Increase
Tooting	1,805	2,656	+851	47%
Camden	1,630	2,446	+816	50%
Brent	1,455	1,528	+73	5%

Figure 7: Referrals fulfilled per hub, 2023 and 2024



# Nataliia's STORY

In June 2022, Nataliia was forced to make the life-changing decision to leave her home in Ukraine amid the dangers of war. With her son Sasha, she travelled to London seeking safety and a new start for her family. Her husband stayed behind to fight, and her grown-up daughter settled in Poland as a primary school teacher.

For Nataliia, this journey marked the start of an uphill battle against uncertainty, isolation, and immense challenges as she worked to rebuild her family's life in a foreign country.

"Moving to London was unexpected and everything was so new," Nataliia remembers. "It was such a big stress. I found myself crying in the mornings, struggling to calm myself. Those first few months were horrible, knowing my husband was fighting on the front line of the war. We had no idea what tomorrow would look like, but the war wasn't going to stop, so I needed to be strong."

The initial months were a whirlwind. The family had no money and limited clothing, and relied heavily on the kindness of



strangers. "The only thing I brought was a small computer with our photographs," Nataliia says. They lived with an Italian family for two months before moving into temporary emergency accommodation. Despite the challenges, Nataliia remained strong for her children.

Sasha, who was 10 when they arrived, struggled with the transition. He spoke no English and was deeply upset about leaving everything behind, including the family's dog and cat – who he says were his best friends. He also desperately missed his dad, who had remained in Ukraine. As Nataliia sadly recalls, "All he asked for was his daddy." It wasn't until 20 December 2023, when her husband finally joined them, that Sasha's wish came true – just in time for his 12th birthday.

While navigating her new life, Nataliia found solace volunteering in the kitchen of a Ukrainian school every Saturday, and eventually secured a role as a teaching assistant at St. James Prep School, where Sasha attends. This job became a turning point. "I'm doing a teaching assistant course, and while studying, I was offered a job," she explains.

Her work has been instrumental in fostering a sense of belonging for both her and Sasha. "A lot of Ukrainian people came to this area during the war, so my son was able to make friends with both Ukrainian and English children, which has been great for him," Nataliia says.

While in the UK, Nataliia welcomed her third child, "baby James", into the world. But with little income, and feeling very daunted about preparing to give birth in a country that was still new to her, Nataliia found herself in desperate need of support.

Introduced to Little Village by a midwife during her pregnancy, Nataliia recalls the immediate relief she felt when we reached out: "Little Village sent me a sling, cot sheets, baby bottles, a small bath, and clothes. I couldn't believe it – within 2–3 days, I had everything I desperately needed."

Even more than the material gifts, the emotional impact was huge: "It was like a gift from Santa Claus watching my son open the books and toys we received. What Little Village did for me was more than just things. It made me know someone was thinking about me during such a tough time."

While challenges still remain, Nataliia remains hopeful about her future – and eager to give back. "There are probably lots of families who don't know about Little Village. I want to help spread the word about how amazing they are and help more families like mine. The more people donate, the more families they can help."

Nataliia has begun to build a brighter future for her family – one filled with hope, love, and the promise of better days ahead.

## 2: Building deeper connections

Developing relationships and connecting families into our extended village is at the heart of what we do – and the reason that our support extends far beyond the material items we provide. It's also central to how families begin to establish their own networks, grow their confidence, and feel more empowered.

Our **Family Connections and Signposting and Guidance Teams** are dedicated to this essential aspect of our service. Through a series of warm interactions with each family, these teams start building the critical connections that will help families create and sustain their own lasting change.

Once we have received a referral, our **Family Connections Welcome Team** calls the family to personally welcome them to our Little Village community and find out about the types of items they want and need. This year, **the team spoke with 2,764 families** at the welcome call stage.

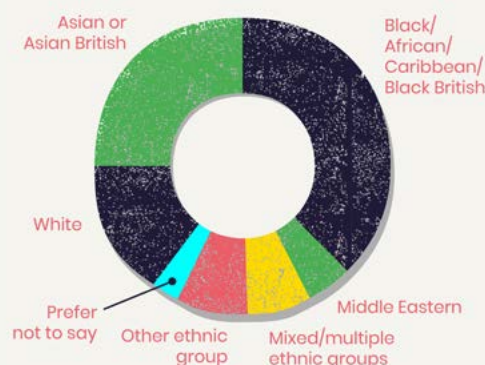
Families tell us that they really appreciate getting this call – not just for the kindness and reassurance it offers, but also for the way it helps us tailor their bundle as closely as possible to their needs and preferences. In the words of one parent: *"I was impressed*

*that, following my conversation with the volunteer on the phone, who asked for preferences in some detail, the items that were sent were perfect and such lovely things – quality stuff. So it felt like the service had really followed through on what they said they were offering."*

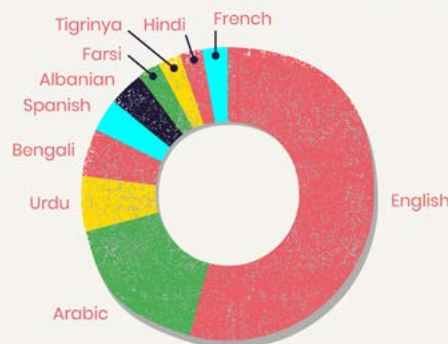
– Family; Signposting and guidance survey

In 2024, we also extended our follow-up support to all families who received a bundle by delivery or attended an appointment at our baby bank hubs. Through a series of warm, one-to-one conversations, we support families who need help getting help. Whether that is support with money, housing, emotional wellbeing, health, or all of these and more, these valuable connections we build for families create the foundations of their own little village of support – and of real, lasting change.

**Figure 7: Signposting and Guidance families' ethnicity**



**Figure 8: Signposting and Guidance families' first language**



This chart reflects the 10 most commonly spoken languages of families supported by Signposting Team – over 15 more are listed.

Our dedicated volunteers in the **Family Connections Follow-up Team** reached out to families **4,771 times** by phone or text message in 2024 – a **62% increase** compared to the previous year – and provided individualised signposting in 620 cases, which is an almost threefold increase from 2023. These, personal, caring conversations help families feel heard and understood – as well as making sure they get the practical help they need.

As this parent explained, *"[These calls are] so helpful because, being a first-time mum, the internet can only do so much, and it's so mind-boggling ... having somebody there who can refer you to foodbanks or just know where to point you makes all the difference."*

– Family; interview

Often, the signposting provided by our Family Connections Team is enough, and families are able to take the next steps towards long-lasting change. But some families need extended, more in-depth support. These are often the most isolated families; those who face the most complex situations, and really struggle to access support in their local community. There are lots of reasons for this: language barriers, mental health issues, lack of access to IT, complicated systems and bureaucracy – or just the burden of having too many challenges to navigate at the same time.

This is where our **Signposting and Guidance Team** come in. Through this service, Little Village will help these families for as long as we can make a difference – working with families over weeks, sometimes months, to access the right support and services.

Our signposting and guidance service is currently funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA), as one of 11 organisations delivering their Advice in a Community Setting programme. Independent research commissioned by the GLA shows that our model is reaching a more diverse group of Londoners than other similar projects; for example, compared to the Advice in Community Settings programme averages, families at Little Village were **more likely to be from a Black or mixed ethnic background.**<sup>16</sup>



The research also found that **77% of participants** who received our signposting and guidance had never accessed a similar service before. This is higher than the programme average, meaning that our signposting and guidance service is reaching families who would otherwise be unsupported. Our families tell us that they trust Little Village, and are more open to speaking to our signposting and guidance volunteers, because of their positive experience of using our baby banks.

*“It was very easy. I just told them the issues I was facing, and they helped me. There was almost no paperwork, and it was very easy to talk to them.”*

— Family; independent research commissioned by GLA

As our expertise has grown, we’ve learnt that supporting families with personalised, in-depth support for longer periods leads to better long-term outcomes. Last year, 417 cases were referred to our Signposting and Guidance Team for tailored support with issues ranging from food poverty and energy bills to poor quality housing and social isolation.

We asked 73 families who had used our signposting and guidance service what they particularly valued about it, and some key themes came up time and again:

- the way we always follow up, to make sure that families facing significant and complex barriers are properly supported and given help getting help;
- the accessible information that we provide in writing, as well as over the phone;
- our responsiveness, particularly for families in urgent situations; and
- the open-ended nature of our support, and the knowledge that they can come back to us if they need to in the future.

Overall, 95% of the families we spoke to said the support received from our Signposting and Guidance Team was either “helpful” or “very helpful” (signposting and guidance survey). In the words of one parent: *“It made me feel like someone cared and that someone was listening to my voice. When she said she would help she did it and she was always very swift and prompt. This made me feel like what I was going through mattered and that I mattered.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

As this service enters its fourth year, it is becoming an increasingly known about and valued part of the Little Village offer alongside our bundles and baby banks. This year, 47% of referral partners were aware of our signposting and guidance service – a 10% increase on last year.

### What impact has this had on families?

Between our Family Connections Team and our Signposting and Guidance Team, we provided signposting support to **1,037 families** in 2024. In the rest of this section, we are going to tell you about some of the specific impacts these interactions have had on families, backed up by results from our surveys and quotes from parents in their own words.

## Impact 1

### Families feel heard and understood by Little Village and other providers

Each family is different, with their own needs, worries, strengths, and hopes for the future. We treat each person as an individual, listening with warmth and care to what they share with us about themselves and their families. This means that we are able to better understand their situation – and respond effectively to help them access the most appropriate support. We can also advocate effectively on their behalf if they are struggling to make their voices heard with other services.

81% of families told us that receiving additional information that was directly relevant to their needs made them feel supported and heard. And as well as opening the door to other forms of practical help, our warm and supportive conversations

provide emotional reassurance that is extremely valuable to families in its own right. An incredible 97% of families we surveyed said the emotional support they received in interactions with Little Village was either “important” or “very important” to them. As this parent elaborated: *“Even talking to someone who really shows concern for you is a nice feeling and sometimes that’s all you want. To hear the words ‘are you ok?’ is really important for mums.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

### Case study

When Parent A was referred to our Signposting and Guidance Team, the family was experiencing multiple serious health issues, and living in cramped and inappropriate accommodation. We supported the family with an emergency foodbank voucher and advocated for them on their housing issues. We also helped them secure a transport Freedom Pass, which meant they could travel to health appointments and other services, and saved them money to spend on other essentials. Thanks to the strong, trusting relationship we built up with A over time, we were able to understand more about their family’s complex needs and helped them to access vital one-to-one support from a caseworker and local children’s centre.

## Impact 2

### Families feel empowered to seek guidance

Families often tell us they feel isolated, and lack confidence and knowledge about how to get help. By listening to and encouraging the families we speak to, we show them they have someone on their side. Not only do families receive concrete practical knowledge about where, when, and how to reach out for help, but they also feel emboldened and empowered to do so – both now and in the future.

This was confirmed by our family survey results, with 81% of families telling us that the information they received from Little Village empowered them to access other services. Likewise, in our signposting and guidance survey, 73% of families said they were either “confident” or “very confident” about accessing support in the future following their interactions with Little Village. Here are some of the specific feedback we received from families, in their own words:

*“[the Little Village volunteer] was very understanding, listened, and followed up like she said she would. She was helpful in answering any questions I had. I felt empowered and encouraged.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

*“The information [Little Village] gave to me helped to get me started and motivated to find out other information ... It made me feel like I wasn’t alone. I feel more confident about getting help as I used to be embarrassed about asking.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

## Impact 3

### Families know how to access networks of support, and in turn share that information with others

For some families, it is difficult to know where to turn for help or how to get the support they need. We see families who have recently been moved to a new London borough; families who have just arrived in the UK; families who have had traumatic experiences; and families who are facing complex, unfamiliar, or unexpected problems in all aspects of their lives.

We draw on our deep local roots – our knowledge of local community initiatives, statutory support, national schemes, and much more – and share that vital information with those who need it. We help families navigate the system, and make sure they are properly connected with the right sources of support.

Sometimes this involves simply passing on details of their closest children’s centre; sometimes it needs more intensive support over time and a referral for specialist help.

In our family survey, 71% of families told us they were able to access help from other services, and 72% found about other local support, because of the information they received from Little Village. As this parent put it: *“It’s like having another google or something, but it’s actually someone you can talk to and who is responsive.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey

This impact is a particularly powerful one, because it continues to grow as the parents we connect with other services go on to champion and share that knowledge, helping others get the same help. In the words of one parent: *“I was able to talk freely with [Little Village] and was given time to explain things fully. I was really happy with the people who helped me. I have been able to share the information I was given from Little Village with other people around me and help them to get help they need.”*

— Family; signposting and guidance survey



## Case study

Parent B was referred to our Signposting and Guidance Team because she had been moved to a new area of London and was isolated from local support networks. We gave her a foodbank voucher, and connected her with her local children’s centre, as well as Citizens Advice for expert guidance on her housing rights. We also linked her with specialist counselling services. As well as benefiting from our practical help, B felt empowered by our support, and gained the confidence to engage with talking therapies to help her emotional wellbeing.

## Impact 4

### Families’ circumstances are improved

We support families to improve their circumstances both immediately and in the long-term. This can take many forms, from issuing a foodbank voucher in a short-term crisis to referring a family for expert help with long-term debt issues; from helping families access emergency housing after an eviction to connecting them with one-to-one, ongoing parenting support.

In 2024, our Signposting and Guidance Team issued 212 foodbank vouchers and



helped families access various financial grants. Through a combination of additional income secured and money saved that would otherwise have been spent on food, this freed up a total of £22,714 for families to use on other essentials.

This is making a real difference to families' circumstances; in our signposting and guidance survey, 88% of families rated the overall impact on their family situation as either "positive" or "very positive". Even more powerfully, **100% of families supported by our signposting and guidance service confirmed that our help had relieved financial pressures, according to the GLA's independent research.** And it's not just the material help like foodbank vouchers making this difference – in our family survey, 77% told us their financial pressures were reduced as a result of information we gave them.

Meanwhile, the impact of our help is also going beyond the realms of families' financial circumstances. The GLA also found that the practical assistance and emotional support that families received from our signposting and guidance service had a "very positive" impact on both their physical health and emotional wellbeing, with 97% of families reporting improvements in these areas. What's more, over three-quarters said that their physical and emotional wellbeing had been helped to a "great extent" – which is well above the programme average of 46% (GLA research).

Here are a few quotes from families who felt their immediate circumstances changed for the better as a result of our support:

*"It put my mind at ease and made me feel calmer and safer. ... After I had been through such a bad situation, it was so nice to know that there are people out there that want to help. It restores your faith in humanity."*

— Signposting and guidance survey

*"We were really stressed with the situation and this was affecting how we were with the children and taking time away from them. [The Little Village volunteer] helped us to get exactly what we needed and this helped us feel better and less stressed."*

— Signposting and guidance survey

**Reaching families who don't ask for help:**

**3 in 4** families had never accessed a signposting service before



### Case study

The Signposting and Guidance Team initially connected with Parent C to help their family with food support. As the family needed an interpreter, we realised they were struggling to access all the help they needed. We referred C and her family to a women's advice organisation for culturally appropriate guidance on immigration, housing, and benefits in their own language. We were also able to connect C with a local children's centre, where she could access English-language lessons and her children could take part in free activities. The family were not only able to enjoy their first summer, but could start to build the rest of their life together in the UK.

Finally, the connections we form with families also mean we can recognise when they may be facing critical challenges that put their wellbeing at risk. Safeguarding is at the heart of our work, and we take our responsibility seriously. All our volunteers and staff receive safeguarding training, to make sure they feel confident about recognising concerns and responding appropriately. We also hold regular case reviews where we can reflect, learn, and strengthen our approach.

In 2024, Little Village's Safeguarding Leads received 43 safeguarding reports, of which 19 cases required contact with external

agencies and 7 were escalated to local authority safeguarding teams. While most safeguarding reports involved the families we work with, 9% related to our volunteers' wellbeing. Equally, our volunteers played a vital role in identifying or supporting 16 of the family cases. Finally, we addressed 14 other concerns that, while not requiring a formal safeguarding response, highlighted a need for increased support and potentially prevented things from reaching a crisis point.

By embedding safeguarding in everything we do, we can act swiftly and sensitively when families face critical challenges, ensuring they receive the right help at the right time. Whether through additional support, improved living conditions, or early intervention, we can help prevent difficulties from escalating, and ensure families feel safe, valued, and supported.

**Emergency Newborn Packs supplied to 92% OF LONDON'S HOSPITALS**



# SARAH'S STORY

## Supporting families

### Sarah's journey as a signposting and guidance volunteer

When Sarah first heard about Little Village, she was working for a community charity. She quickly recognised the impact our service could have on struggling families, especially after helping a disabled mother of two secure a double buggy that transformed her daily life. That moment stuck with Sarah, and when she later decided to look for a volunteer opportunity, Little Village was the natural choice.

Now, as a volunteer in our Signposting and Guidance Team, Sarah dedicates one day a week to supporting families facing complex challenges. Parents who visit Little Village hubs often need more than just essential baby items – they may be struggling with debt, social isolation, food poverty, mental health concerns, housing insecurity, or complex combinations of all these and more. When our frontline staff and volunteers identify these deeper needs, they refer the family to our dedicated Signposting and Guidance Team, where volunteers like Sarah step in.

Sarah connects with these families through phone calls, offering a compassionate ear and practical support. "We have a wide-ranging chat about how things are going and what their most fundamental needs are," she explains. "Sometimes, just having someone listen without judgement makes all the difference." Often, the first step is securing a foodbank voucher – vital for ensuring that no child goes hungry. "I then tailor my support and think about the bigger picture for the family and how we might be able to direct them for further support."

As part of her role, Sarah helps families navigate financial struggles, particularly around debt and rising energy costs. "In the winter, the last thing you want is for a family to be cold because they're turning off the heating," she says. "One mum told me she was wearing three jumpers inside just to save money on the gas bill. By guiding parents through these challenges, via debt advice services or available grants, I can help them regain stability in challenging times."

"Many parents feel isolated and overwhelmed, and having someone to talk to can make a world of difference. By connecting them with counselling services, local parenting groups, or even just providing reassurance, I can help foster

a sense of community and belonging for parents who just need that extra bit of care. Parenting can be so lonely, especially when you're struggling," Sarah reflects. "Sometimes, just knowing that support is out there gives people the strength to carry on."

The hours Sarah puts in as a volunteer are vital – and make a real difference in

breaking the cycle of hardship. Volunteers like Sarah don't just offer parents practical assistance; they also give them a much-needed sense of hope.

"I know what amazing work Little Village does, and I know that through my role I can help make a lasting difference in the lives of families who need it most."





## 3: Volunteering

At the heart of our “little village” is our dedicated and diverse team of volunteers, who make everything else we do possible. In 2024, our volunteers contributed a total of 31,348 hours, packing love, passion, and care into every single one.

We have 734 regular volunteers, who are each assigned to one of five main roles: Pick & Pack Helpers; Baby Bank Helpers; Volunteer Drivers; Signposting and Guidance; and Family Connections. These roles provide consistency and reliability, reflecting the values that families have come to trust from Little Village.

This year, we’ve listened to our volunteers and made it even easier to get involved. By restructuring some of our on-site activities, we have created accessible pathways for a more diverse range of volunteers, including young people, corporate teams, and those who prefer behind-the-scenes work.

Our Pick & Pack and Baby Bank Helper roles now allow volunteers to match their skills, availability, and confidence levels to their role, and we offer opportunities for volunteers to develop in these areas if they choose. Overall, these on-site roles accounted for 84% of our total volunteer hours in 2024.

*“I love the way Little Village is structured. I feel I can make a difference because of the great way the charity is organised. Very clear role division and cooperation between the diverse roles.”*

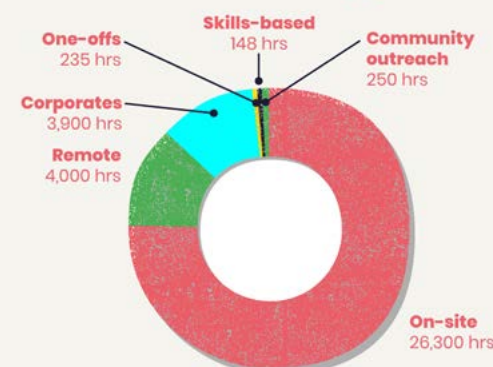
— Volunteer; survey

### Corporate and partner volunteers

Our corporate volunteer teams have also made a huge impact in 2024, with 99 groups contributing over 3,900 hours over the year. We were delighted to welcome many back on multiple occasions, including Travers Smith, Quintessentially, Clermont Hotels, Johnson Matthey, Google, Cisco, and Centrica.

We were also thrilled to welcome volunteers from Barnet Youth Justice Service, St Mungo’s, OMNES, the Foundation for International Education, AIFS, NHS Choices, and Camden Parent Champions, as well as nursing students from Kingston University, and students from several other colleges across London.

**Figure 9: Hours by type of volunteering**



As well as our on-site roles, Little Village also offers remote volunteering opportunities that are just as critical to our work supporting families. Volunteers in home-based roles – our Family Connections and Signposting and Guidance Teams – as well as our Volunteer Drivers, contributed over 4,000 hours to Little Village in 2024. These roles provide flexible options for those who can’t travel to our physical sites but would still like to get involved, and are also a great opportunity for volunteers with specialised skills.

This flexibility is also appreciated by volunteers who are currently employed (totalling 40% of our volunteers in 2024), as it allows them to fit their volunteering around their jobs and other commitments. As this volunteer put it:

*“I really enjoy driving, meeting families albeit quite briefly! I really value that there’s no pressure to go [to volunteer] more than I can realistically do with a full-time job and that Little Village is always looking for ways to further evolve in every way. I am so glad I found you!”*

— Volunteer; survey

### New volunteering opportunities

In 2024, we introduced new opportunities to make volunteering with us even more accessible. For example, with our new one-off volunteering option, 146 people were able to get involved for just one day. Over 700 hours were contributed through this initiative, and many of the individuals who took part have since become regular volunteers, made financial contributions, or helped us to build long-term partnerships. This shows how creating a positive first experience can lead to long-term involvement – like in the case of this volunteer, who told us:

*“I volunteered at your one-off day and was very touched by the work and the impact of Little Village. I asked my supplier to make a donation to you on my behalf, instead of sending me a Christmas present. I also asked my company if Little Village could be selected to receive a donation from our corporate fund – I am pleased to confirm that this has been approved.”*

— Volunteer; survey

This year also saw the successful launch of a new skills-based volunteering initiative, offered to existing volunteers with particular skillsets. These volunteers contributed 148 hours to short-term projects, including delivery checks, data analysis, procurement, and consultancy. The opportunity to fulfil skills-based roles has proven popular with volunteers who are on career breaks or looking for charity-sector work experience, as well as students and retirees.

Following feedback from our 2023 volunteer focus groups, this year we started training volunteers to take part in first-round interview panels when recruiting for new staff who will be working closely with volunteers. Our volunteers proved to be a valuable addition to the recruitment process, using their first-hand experience of Little Village to go beyond the applicant's CV and focus on finding the right person for the right role. Meanwhile, the volunteers themselves benefitted from training and experience that they can use to boost their own CVs, and the process helped to strengthen their connection to Little Village.

This year, we also started asking volunteers to speak regularly at staff training days. Individuals share their experiences of volunteering with Little Village, helping to build and consolidate relationships between staff and volunteers – particularly those who don't work

together regularly. This initiative also offers another chance for volunteers to build their professional skills – such as presentation and public speaking – and to gain confidence by putting them into practice.

Finally, 2024 also saw increased interest among our volunteers for a number of ad hoc community outreach opportunities. Activities ranging from hosting donation and/or referral sessions to attending talks or fairs on our behalf proved extremely popular, with more than 250 hours given over the course of the year.

### Personal impacts for volunteers

When our volunteers thrive, so do we – and so do the families we serve. That's why we work hard to make sure our volunteers enjoy, benefit, and grow from their experience with us. And our volunteers consistently tell us how their time at Little Village has helped them build connections, gain confidence, and boost their wellbeing.

**In fact, an overwhelming 99% of volunteers said they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their experience.** Here are a number of specific impacts that volunteers mentioned via our 2024 survey:

### Overall wellbeing

- 61% feel an increased sense of self-worth and purpose

- 54% report improved mental health, including reduced stress and anxiety

### Building connections

- 49% said they made new friends through volunteering
- 50% said volunteering has given them an opportunity to mix with people from different backgrounds
- 99% feel we create a space that is welcoming to people from many walks of life

### Growing confidence and developing skills

- 48% said they gained new skills during their time with us
- 6 volunteers were offered a paid role within Little Village

Supporting these statistics, the following quotes provide a more nuanced picture of how individual volunteers feel about their time with Little Village:

*“Reflecting on my volunteering journey, I identified new skills such as effective communication, empathy, and problem-solving, which are transferable to my nursing career. The confidence gained from handling diverse and challenging situations will be invaluable in my future professional endeavours.”*

— Volunteer; placement feedback

*“I've really relished my time volunteering for Little Village; the staff are friendly, supportive, and dedicated. It's helped me to build my confidence and hone my work skills after being a full-time mum for eight years. Consequently, I have gone on to find employment in the charity sector and the experience gained at Little Village helped me to achieve this.”*

— Volunteer; survey

Our volunteers make a difference to every individual family they help – but their impact doesn't end there. Little Village volunteers also become some of our strongest advocates and champions. For example, 45% of volunteers tell us that their experience with Little Village has changed their attitudes towards sustainability, and that they now actively seek out ways to recycle or donate their pre-loved goods.

In turn, volunteers are motivated to go out and talk about our work, championing our cause and furthering our mission. This year, 84% of volunteers told us that they have introduced others to Little Village, for example as fellow volunteers, donors, or fundraising partners. And in our 2024 survey, our volunteers gave us a Net Promoter Score of 78, which is classed as an “excellent” rating (**see pages 19–20**).

At Little Village, our volunteers not only meet their own goals, they also bring our community closer together. Whether



on-site, at home, or in the community, our volunteers are living proof of what happens when people come together to share and support each other.

Here are some final thoughts, in our volunteers' own words, about the positive impacts they've experienced through their time at Little Village:

*"I feel a sense of achievement, purpose and joy as I am contributing to making a difference to people's lives. It is rewarding and has increased my self-confidence. It is a welcoming and friendly environment where you develop new working relationships with other volunteers."*

— Volunteer; survey

*"The people are nice. It's made me feel more a part of the local community. And it's given me an insight into the challenges that many families in London (and across the UK) are facing, which I think I have been somewhat insulated from."*

— Volunteer; survey

*"I enjoy talking to families about their experiences of the signposting and guidance service and hearing about the positive impact we've had on their lives. I gain fulfilment and a sense of purpose from using some of my time in a small way to support the work of Little Village and the families they help."*

— Volunteer; survey



## 4: Circular living Looking after our planet

The health of our planet and the health of families are deeply connected. To create a healthier future for all, we must protect and restore the environment we depend on.

At the heart of our work is a commitment to sustainability in action. We focus on reducing waste, promoting a culture of reuse, and fostering a circular economy within our community. By diverting resources from landfill, championing second-hand use, and shifting attitudes towards sustainable consumption, we are helping to drive lasting environmental and social change.

In this section, we highlight four key ways our efforts are making a tangible difference – benefiting both our local environment and the wider planet.

### Environmental impact

In 2024, we gifted families with over 128 tonnes worth of items, which may otherwise have ended up in landfill.

This included:

- 52 tonnes of clothing and bedding;
- 40 tonnes of larger items, such as cots and buggies;
- 1 tonne of small electricals, such as sterilisers and baby monitors;
- 14 tonnes of books; and
- 22 tonnes of small plastics, such as toys, bottles, beakers, and bowls.

Like last year, we have used the WRAP Benefits of Reuse Tool to work out the positive environmental impacts of our local-donation ecosystem over the last 12 months. The tool compares the impact of passing on pre-loved items – assuming that they will be used for a further two years from the date of the gift – with the impact of the same items being sent to landfill straight away. This calculation indicates that we have saved:

- 174 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent emissions;
- 1,255,430 MJ-equivalent of fossil fuel energy from the production of new items; and
- 0.9 Sb-equivalent of other natural resources from the production of new items.

**174 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent emissions** is approximately **124 cars off the road for a year** in the UK.<sup>17</sup>

In 2024, Little Village  
gifted 128 tonnes of  
items to families

Figure 10

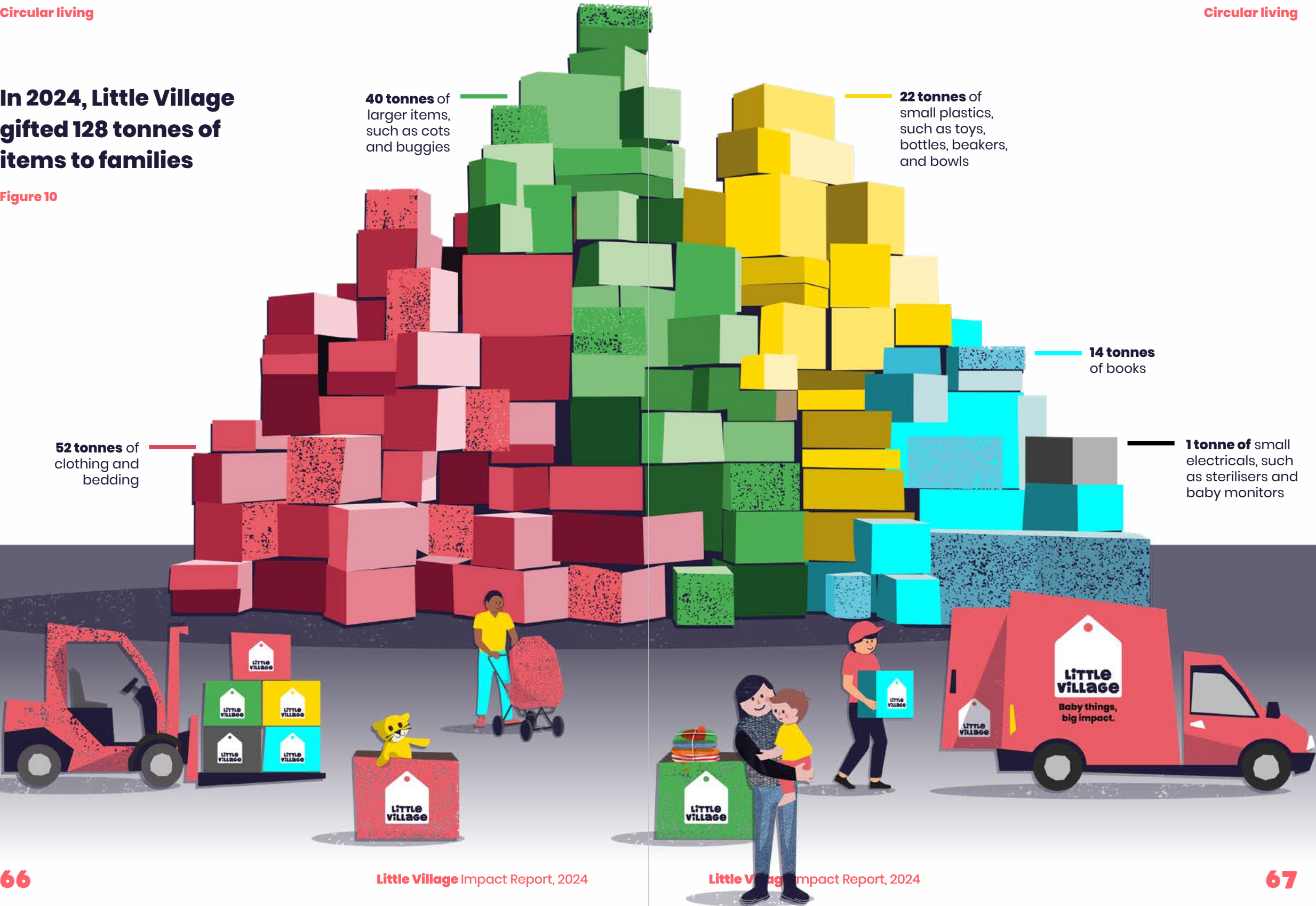
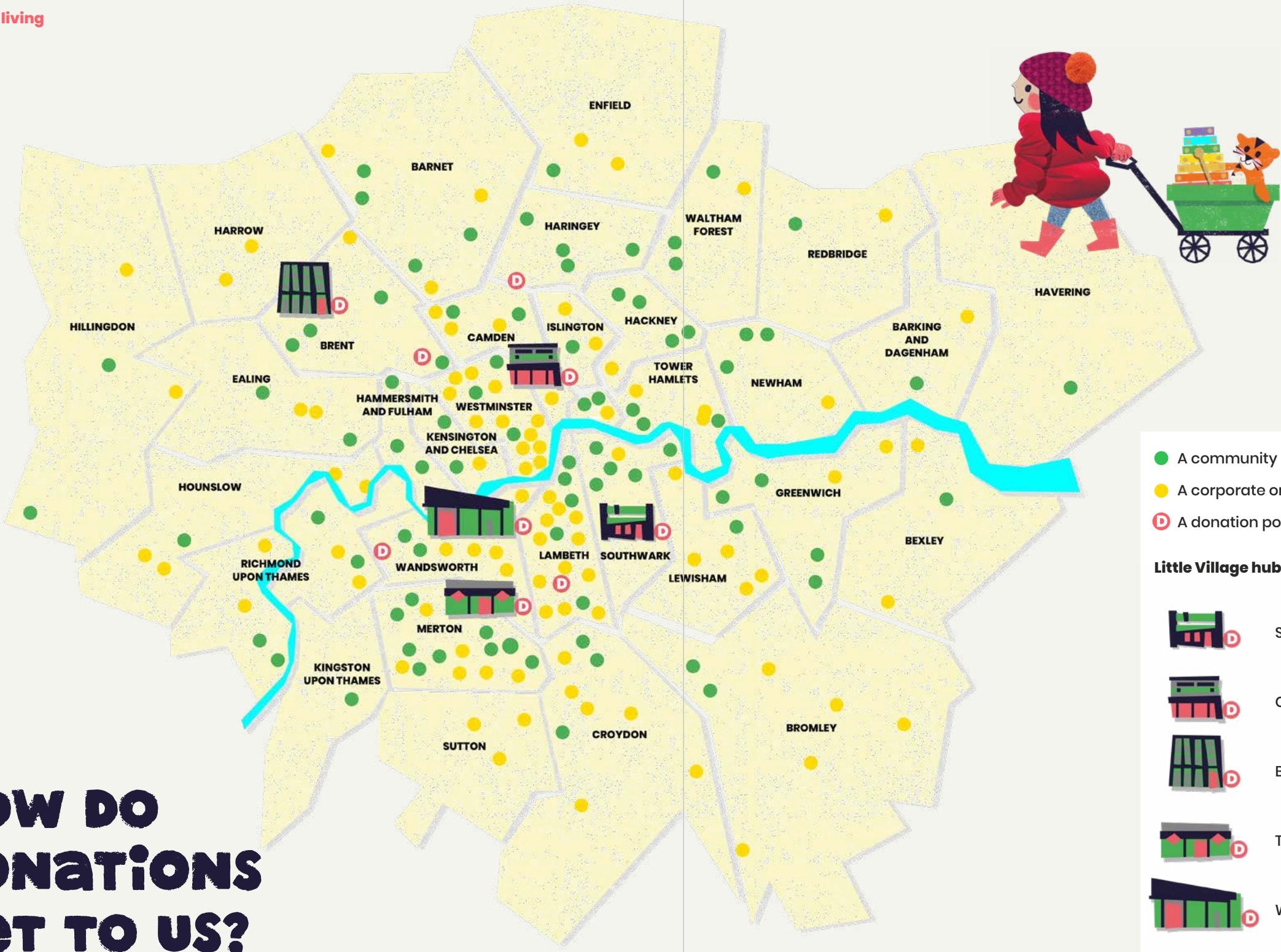




Figure 11

# HOW DO DONATIONS GET TO US?





### Promoting reuse by making it easy to donate

In 2024, we worked closely with a diverse network of organisations and supporters to expand our donation points across London (see Figure 11). This has made it even easier for people to donate within their local communities, including in areas of the capital we haven't previously covered.

Once again this year, we partnered with **businesses, nurseries, schools, and food banks** to create **128 events and pop-up donation points** across the city. Alongside our **nine regular donation points**, this provided families – and our many other supporters – with a wealth of convenient opportunities to share their pre-loved clothes and essential items.

What's more, in 2024, we accepted unsold or unused stock from businesses and other supporters on **208 occasions**. Goods that we received in this way included stock from large second-hand charities such as Traid; inventory left over from shop closures; end-of-line items; merchandise with out-of-date branding; and various sample products. All of these items can now be passed on to families and reused, instead of ending up in landfill.

### Continuing the reuse chain beyond Little Village

At Little Village, we are passionately committed to promoting reuse and preventing waste – starting with our own operations.

In 2024, we became a new member of the Charity Retail Association, the Reuse Network, and WRAP. And in August, we opened a new warehouse where we have transformed the way we receive, sort, and distribute donations. As part of these efforts, we introduced a new professional weighing setup, which now means we can track inbound and outbound stock more accurately and collaborate more effectively with partner organisations.

This has proved particularly useful when it comes to managing our stock levels. We've always passed on excess donations to other organisations to prevent waste, but thanks to the new weighing system we now have even more options. We now work with **nine organisations** – including Fara, the Felix Project Multibank, and Sebby's Corner – distributing surplus stock to where it is most needed. This is an increase from previous years, when we worked with just three key organisations (plus two community groups). Since moving to our new warehouse, we have processed a total of **85.3 tonnes** of donated goods at that site alone.

Our partnership with the **Felix Project Multibank** in particular has had a significant impact on our operational efficiency in 2024, helping us to both receive and redistribute essential supplies. Since June, we have received **1.1 tonnes of stock** from this partner, including nappies, toiletries, blankets, and other vital resources. At the same time, we were able to **redistribute 6.3 tonnes of our own excess stock** to families supported by other Multibank charity partners, via 60 community groups across 20 London boroughs. This included a significant range of clothing, baby essentials, toys, furniture, and miscellaneous items that would otherwise risk going unused.

But all this is more than just a matter of operational efficiency. Our new way of working has had a real, concrete impact on the families and individuals we support – ultimately helping us reach more people and making sure that that every donation gets to where it is most needed.

### Changing attitudes towards giving and receiving pre-loved items

For some time now, people have been becoming increasingly comfortable with receiving and donating used items – for example, over 80% of our volunteers and 75% of our referral partners say they already supported recycling and reuse before working with us. But among

our families, perceptions still seem less positive. While some tell us that they already pass on their own pre-loved goods, only 41% choose to use and buy second-hand.

At Little Village, we remain committed to changing these attitudes, by showing families that pre-loved clothing and other items can be both fit for purpose and of high quality. And we do know that these efforts are having an impact. In this year's survey of families, 52% said that they were more open to using second-hand goods in the future, after receiving items they needed from Little Village. And encouragingly, 72% said they would pass on their items to another family once their child has finished with them – another example of continuing the reuse chain and preventing waste.

Finally, it's not just families whose attitudes are changed by their experience with Little Village. Since referring families to us and seeing our work firsthand, 45% of our professional partners say they have changed their behaviours and now proactively find ways to pass on or recycle items they no longer need. Likewise, 53% of our volunteers tell us that they are now more open to the idea of passing items on.





*"I didn't go in to my pregnancy thinking that I would be struggling for these sort of things so initially, it was like – not that I had a bad stigma, but you sort of don't think you're gonna have to use second-hand items for your child. But then, looking at it from a point of view from where you're in need of basic essentials, and then seeing that you can have these basic essentials that are in great or perfect condition, it actually makes you realise that it's fine and now I'm very open to it. It changed my perspective on second-hand items a lot."*

— Family; interview

## 5: Raising our voice for change

In 2024, we continued our work to raise awareness of the need faced by the families we support – and those supported by other baby banks across the country. We extended the reach of Little Village's voice, by growing our own communications channels – including our social media communities – building partnerships, inspiring media coverage, and investing in social media advertising.

As always, at the heart of our communications are the voices of the families we help, alongside data to help show the scale of the problem, and clear calls for action. In this way, we help to shine a light on child poverty; to draw attention to the tireless work that baby banks do to address it; and, most of all, to build support for measures to **end it**.

### Media and public campaigns

The warm relationships we build help families grow the confidence to speak up – and in doing so, to help us help more families like them.

Six families were involved in sharing their stories during 2024 – both through our

own channels and with local and national media, including:

- The One Show (BBC One)
- BBC Politics London
- ITV News London
- *The Evening Standard*
- *The Independent*
- London Live

We created three core campaigns in 2024, providing platforms to raise awareness of particular needs, and galvanising support from our partners and members of the public. In June, we held our "Great Big Baby Shower"; in autumn our "Winter Warmers" appeal; and for Christmas we ran a campaign with the theme "Bundles of Joy".

Each campaign was promoted across multiple communications channels and featured the voices and stories of families – including this year's Christmas film, which gave five mums a chance to describe the big difference Little Village has made to their lives.

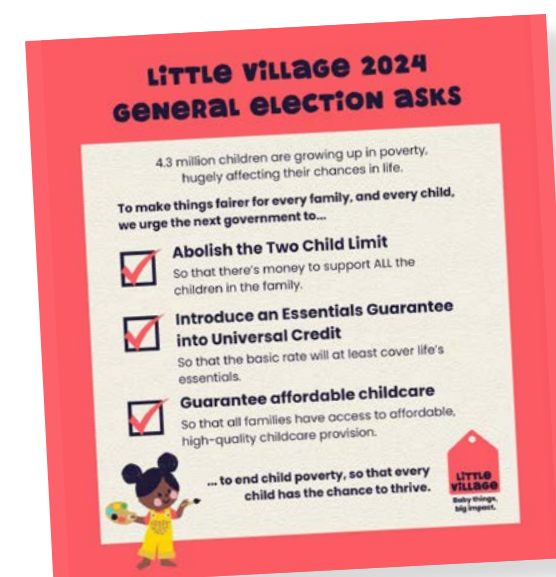
### Campaigning for political action

Our relationships and conversations with families have given us tremendous insight into their daily lives – and the realities of poverty in the capital. Over the last year, we have used that knowledge to advocate for vital policy change that could improve

the lives of thousands of children in London and beyond.

We know that nothing will change without action from the national government. This is why we produced a manifesto for the General Election in July 2024, calling for a number of public policy changes including an end to the harmful two-child limit on benefits. Removing this limit would lift a staggering **300,000 children out of poverty straight away**, and lessen the depth of poverty for another 700,000 children.<sup>18</sup>

In 2024, we also submitted evidence to the Department for Health and Social Care's consultation on extending Healthy Start to families with no recourse to public funds, arguing that **all** children in poverty should be supported to access nutritious food, milk, and vitamins – regardless of their parents' immigration status.





Although at the time of writing none of these changes have been made, we continue stand alongside our families to engage with local, regional, and national politicians and make the case for change.

We are pleased that many of these politicians are keen to support us practically – such as the MP for Clapham and Brixton Hill, Bell Ribeiro-Addy, who assisted our Winter Warmers campaign by hosting a pop-up donation session at a church in Clapham.

The Mayor of London and the GLA have financially supported Little Village's signposting and guidance service since 2021, and this was extended with further financial and public support in 2024. The mayor, along with Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice, Debbie Weekes-Bernard, also visited our Camden hub, met a family and volunteers, and gave a public endorsement of our work and mission. As well as attracting

media coverage, the visit featured in a bespoke film posted online by the mayor's office, helping to raise vital awareness of our work and the needs we are meeting.

### Raising the profile of baby banks through the Baby Bank Alliance

On a national level, we have continued our work as co-founder of the Baby Bank Alliance (alongside Save the Children UK, Purposeful Ventures, and Baby Bank Network Bristol), and were delighted to have the official launch in July 2024 covered on Channel 4 News.

This was followed by a partnership with IKEA, whose SKOGSDUVA children's range was launched in support of the alliance at an event attended by 22 family influencers. Much-needed funds were raised thanks to the donation of £1 for each item sold in stores throughout the campaign.

For two weeks in November 2024, ITV's *Lorraine* show ran the Great Big Baby Bank Appeal, with over 40 minutes of content including footage of the programme's key presenters visiting four baby banks. This ran in partnership with Morrisons, whose stores collected over 120,000 items, such as nappies and toiletries, which went directly to local baby banks.

We are incredibly proud of this work, which has all raised valuable awareness of baby banks – just the *Lorraine* coverage alone will have been seen by around five million people – and brought a number of new baby banks into the Alliance. As of the end of 2024, the Alliance has more than 200 members.



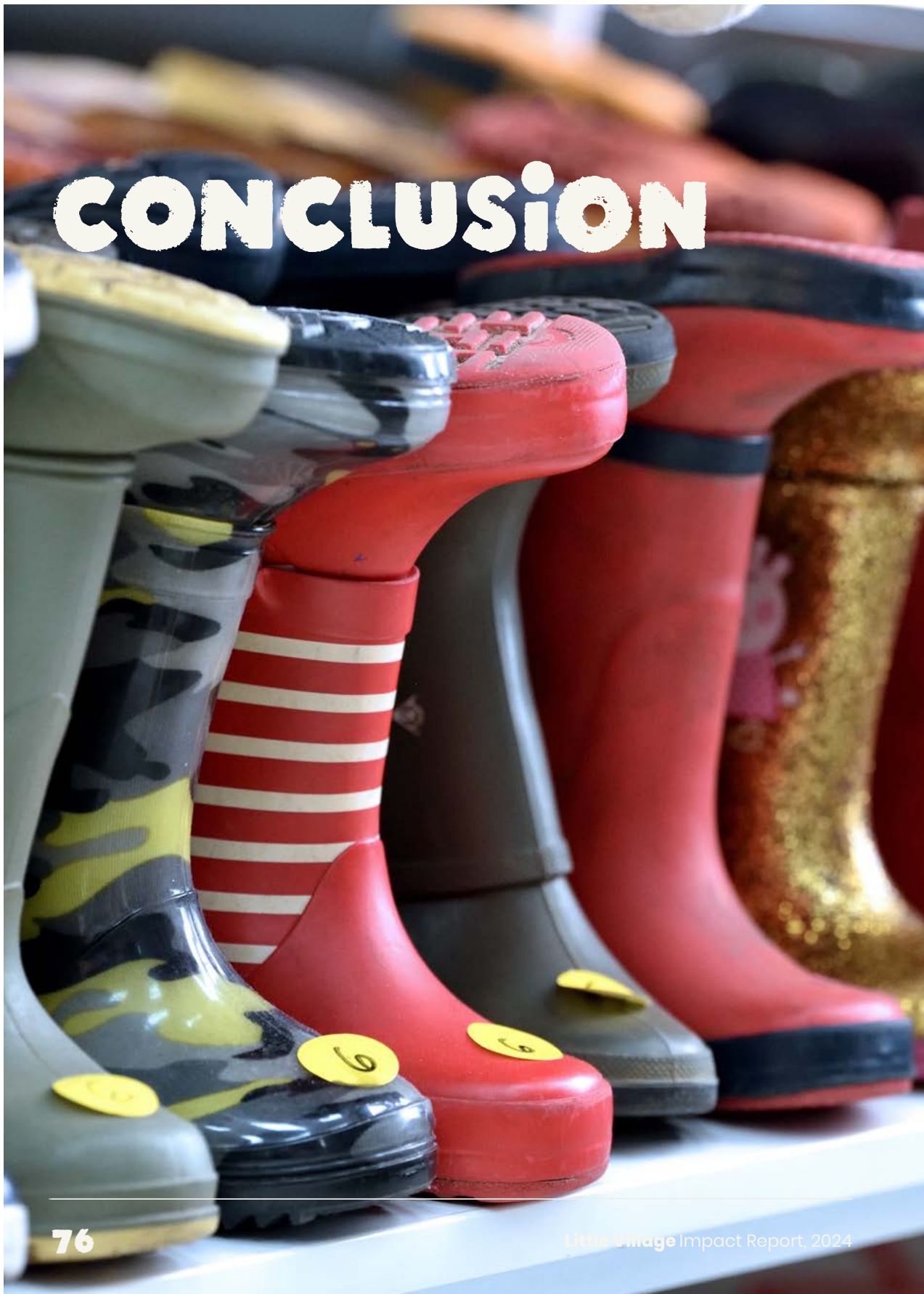
### Looking ahead

- We will continue to work with families to raise their voices and perspectives – in the media and through Little Village's own platforms and events – to change perceptions of poverty.
- We will also continue to draw attention to the government's ability to very quickly improve family circumstances by lifting the two-child limit and removing the overall benefit cap. We will push for these measures to be included in the Child Poverty Strategy that we expect the government to publish midway through 2025.

**45%**  
of families skip meals so their children have enough to eat







## As we close this report, we want to take a moment to say thank you.

Everything we have achieved this year has only been possible because of the kindness, dedication, and generosity of our supporters, volunteers, and partners who make up our “Little Village”.

As with all our impact reports, this is for you. We want to show you the difference your support has made in 2024 – and we hope you are proud of what you have read in these pages.

Yet a year on from our previous report, the need for Little Village still exists. That’s why our impact reports also include space for the other side of our narrative – a solemn reminder of why we are here and why our work continues to matter. We know that this is much harder to read.

Over the past year, Little Village has reached thousands of families, both directly via our hubs and through our partnership programmes, to give children the essentials they need to thrive. We have also deepened our connections with families, recognising that how we give support – from that first cup of tea with a volunteer in one of our hubs, to a specialist referral from our Signposting and Guidance Team – is just as important as the support itself. Families have told us that our caring, personalised approach

matters – and we remain committed to making them feel valued, heard, and connected.

At the same time, the scale of demand is overwhelming, continuing to exceed our capacity to respond. No family in the UK should face such hardship – this situation is unacceptable, and we want to **end it**. That’s why, in 2025, we will continue to raise our voice for change, advocating for a future where families no longer have to rely on emergency support. We will also strengthen our partnerships and connections so that families can access the right help more quickly, where and when they need it. And we will keep doing what we do best – providing high-quality, pre-loved essentials so that children can thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. There is much work to do, but together, we can build a future where no child goes without.

Endnotes

1 Calculation assumes average CO2-equivalent emissions of 211 grams per car per mile (Department for Transport statistics, aggregated and analysed by NimbleFins [2024], available at: [www.nimblefins.co.uk/average-co2-emissions-car-uk](http://www.nimblefins.co.uk/average-co2-emissions-car-uk)), and an average annual mileage of 7,000 miles per car (Department for Transport [2023], National Travel Survey, available to download at: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics)). Both the emissions per car per mile and annual average mileage figures are current UK averages; this accounts for a notable difference from our 2023 Impact Report, which used US-based averages.

2 See <https://cpag.org.uk/policy-and-research/findings-our-projects/cost-child-reports> for the difference in the cost of raising a child in 2024 vs 2023

3 [https://media.actionforchildren.org.uk/documents/Low-income\\_families\\_in\\_full-time\\_work\\_February\\_2024.pdf](https://media.actionforchildren.org.uk/documents/Low-income_families_in_full-time_work_February_2024.pdf)

4 [www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk)

5 [www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk)

6 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/deep-poverty-and-destitution-in-the-uk-2023>

7 [www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-09/report-no-crib-bed-poverty-cost-living-crisis.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-09/report-no-crib-bed-poverty-cost-living-crisis.pdf)

8 [www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk/uk-poverty-2024-the-essential-guide-to-understanding-poverty-in-the-uk)

9 <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/education-endowment-foundation-eef-comment-disadvantaged-pupils-half-as-likely-to-get-a-good-pass-in-gcse-english-or-maths-compared-to-peers>

10 Gutman, L., Joshi, H., Parsonage, M. & Schoon, I. (2015) Children of the new century: Mental health findings from the Millennium Cohort Study. London: Centre for Mental Health.

11 <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/child-health-inequalities-position-statement>

12 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-profile-for-england/chapter-5-inequality-in-health?utm\\_source](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-profile-for-england/chapter-5-inequality-in-health?utm_source)

13 The Family Stress Model shows how financial hardship creates emotional distress in parents and inter-parental conflict, which then disrupts parenting quality and family relationships – ultimately leading to worse outcomes for children.

See <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4742411>

14 <https://centreforearlychildhood.org/research/>

15 <https://wrap.org.uk/>

16 [www.mimeconsulting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/AiCS-Year-2-Evaluation-Report.pdf](http://www.mimeconsulting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/AiCS-Year-2-Evaluation-Report.pdf)

17 Calculation assumes average CO2-equivalent emissions of 211 grams per car per mile (Department for Transport statistics, aggregated and analysed by NimbleFins [2024], available at: [www.nimblefins.co.uk/average-co2-emissions-car-uk](http://www.nimblefins.co.uk/average-co2-emissions-car-uk)), and an average annual mileage of 7,000 miles per car (Department for Transport [2023], National Travel Survey, available to download at: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics)). Both the emissions per car per mile and annual average mileage figures are current UK averages; this accounts for a notable difference from our 2023 Impact Report, which used US-based averages.

18 Child Poverty Action Group: <http://www.cpag.org.uk/policy-and-research/our-position/two-child-limit-our-position#:~:text=Scrapping%20the%20two%2Dchild%20limit,two%20children%20in%20a%20family>





**"WE KNOW  
SOMEONE IS  
CARING ABOUT  
US. IT GIVES ME  
COURAGE."**

— Parent we supported



Member of the  
Baby Bank Alliance.

[littlevillagehq.org](http://littlevillagehq.org)