BRIDGING THE GAP MENTORING

Charity number: 1162671

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

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Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Bridging the Gap Islington, operating as Bridging the Gap Mentoring (BTGM), is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its constitution. It is registered with the Charity Commission under charity number 1162671.

Trustees and leadership

The trustees continued to guide the charity through a significant period of renewal following the one of the founder's decision to retirement through ill health Date to be confirmed . During the year, the board appointed Dave Smith as BTGM's first Chief Executive Officer. The appointment created more consistent leadership capacity and brought a renewed focus to delivery, fundraising, partnership development and organisational sustainability.

The board retained oversight of safeguarding, finances, service quality and organisational development. Trustees reviewed delivery information and participant outcomes and supported the move from an organisation that depended heavily on informal, founder-held knowledge towards clearer and more resilient working arrangements.

The Charity Commission currently records the following trustees:

Trustee	Role	Date appointed
Greg Foxsmith	Chair	15 July 2015
Lee Wakefield	Treasurer	16 April 2024
Cllr Ruth Hayes	Trustee	15 October 2019
Sharmila Rajaratnam	Trustee	23 January 2017
Robin Latimer	Trustee	15 July 2015

Source: Charity Commission register of charities, trustee record for Bridging the Gap Islington.

Staff and volunteers

BTGM remained a small organisation in which staff, trustees and volunteers worked closely together. The delivery structure included the part-time CEO, an Outreach Manager and Supervisor, and a Lived Experience Mentor and Trainer. Volunteer mentors remained central to the charity's work.

We have 3 paid staff, 3 contractors and 10 volunteers

Policies, processes and organisational development

A major priority was to strengthen the practical systems around mentoring. BTGM reviewed the client journey from referral and first contact through assessment, matching, mentoring, supervision, review, outcome recording and closure. Forms and working procedures were developed or improved so that staff, supervisors and mentors had clearer expectations and decisions could be recorded more consistently.

This work included improvements to referral information, assessment and goal setting, mentor matching, session records, supervision, participant feedback and outcome monitoring. It was designed to protect the personal and relational quality of mentoring while making the service safer, clearer and less dependent on knowledge held by a small number of individuals.

Reference and administration details

Registered name	Bridging the Gap Islington
Operational name	Bridging the Gap Mentoring (BTGM)
Charity number	1162671
Legal status	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered address	200a Pentonville Road, Islington, London N1 9JP
Website	https://bridging-mentoring.org.uk
Chief Executive Officer	Dave Smith
Chair of Trustees	Greg Foxsmith

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

BTGM's mission is to help adults experiencing multiple disadvantage rebuild stable, independent lives through trusted one-to-one mentoring, practical support and community connection.

The charity supports people affected by homelessness or housing insecurity, offending, substance misuse, domestic abuse, poor mental health, poverty, low confidence, literacy and digital barriers, and social isolation. Mentors work alongside participants on goals chosen by the participant, which may include housing, benefits, healthcare, appointments, routines, relationships, education, volunteering, employment and community participation.

ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This section demonstrates BTGM's public benefit and how the charity furthered its purposes during the year. The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Strategic summary

The year was one of renewal and steady progress. Following a difficult transition after the founder and unpaid CEO stood down through ill health, BTGM appointed its first CEO and began rebuilding leadership capacity, fundraising, partnerships and delivery.

Income increased in 2025–26. For a charity of BTGM's size, this was a significant improvement. It gave the organisation greater capacity to sustain mentoring, strengthen operational systems and plan with more confidence.

The central strategic task was to protect what has always made BTGM effective — a personal, practical and trusted relationship between mentor and participant while placing stronger foundations around it. This meant clarifying roles, improving the client journey, strengthening referral routes, developing better evidence and becoming more visible within local communities and services.

Mentoring delivery

BTGM continued to provide practical, person-centred one-to-one mentoring, normally for up to 16 weekly sessions. Mentors supported participants to understand forms and letters, attend appointments, deal with housing or benefits issues, reconnect with services, rebuild routines, improve confidence and explore education, volunteering or employment.

Mentoring remained distinct from therapy, professional casework, legal advice and crisis intervention. Mentors were not expected to replace housing officers, clinicians or specialist advisers. Their value lay in being a consistent person who could help someone remain engaged, face difficult tasks and make better use of the services already available.

BTGM also introduced a shorter option alongside its established 16-week programme. This was developed in response to feedback that some people experiencing trauma, uncertainty or low confidence could feel overwhelmed by an initial commitment to longer support. A shorter intervention allowed people to engage at a manageable pace and, where appropriate, move into a longer mentoring relationship.

Bethany House

BTGM continued to strengthen its partnership with Bethany House Women's Service in Islington. Regular presence and one-to-one support helped residents build trust, improve confidence, engage with services and take manageable steps towards greater stability.

The learning from Bethany House informed the development of a similar offer for men at Conway House in Camden.to start late 2026. Although hostel residents have accommodation, many remain at risk of renewed homelessness, relapse, reoffending, crisis or prolonged isolation. BTGM's role is to provide the steady, relational support that helps people make use of specialist and statutory services and sustain the progress they have begun.

This work strengthened BTGM's understanding of a hostel-based mentoring model that can combine targeted practical support with a route into longer one-to-one mentoring.

Partnership with Rehabit

BTGM have develop its partnership with Rehabit, a specialist addiction counselling and peer-support charity. The two organisations bring complementary strengths. BTGM provides sustained mentoring, practical navigation and community connection, while Rehabit provides specialist recovery support when substance use or relapse threatens housing, relationships or wider stability.

The partnership included shared clients and the development of clearer referral routes. It offers greater continuity for people who might otherwise be passed between separate services, particularly those affected by homelessness, criminal justice involvement, addiction and poor mental health.

Community presence and referral relationships

BTGM increased its visibility in Islington and across the local voluntary and community sector. The charity promoted its service through local networks, partner organisations, hostels and community contacts, helping frontline workers understand the people for whom mentoring may be most useful.

A regular table at the Islington Access Hub gave BTGM a direct and visible presence with residents and partner organisations. It created opportunities to explain the mentoring offer, develop relationships, receive enquiries and remain connected to emerging local needs.

This work complemented relationships with hostels, probation and criminal justice contacts, housing providers, substance misuse services and other voluntary organisations. BTGM's contribution is complementary rather than duplicative: helping people access services, remain engaged and build the confidence and stability needed to benefit from them.

Volunteers, training and supervision

Volunteers remained at the heart of BTGM. Their patience, reliability and life experience enabled the charity to offer support that was personal, community based and rooted in ordinary human connection.

During the year, BTGM strengthened the framework around volunteer involvement, including recruitment, DBS checks, introductory training, boundaries, safeguarding, session recording, regular check-ins and reflective supervision. Mentor observations and supervision discussions also helped the charity identify emerging needs and improve delivery.

Monitoring, feedback and evidence

BTGM combined outcome monitoring with participant feedback, mentor observations, supervision and trustee oversight. Participants agreed personal goals at the beginning of mentoring and progress was reviewed through records, questionnaires, mentor notes and supervisor review.

During the year, BTGM supported 17 people through structured one-to-one mentoring and delivered 14 targeted interventions. Reported outcomes included 65% improving health and wellbeing, 53% improving personal relationships, 42% making progress with benefits or financial stability, and 70% improving literacy, form-filling or digital confidence.

Client activity totals. Between 10 October 2025 and 31 March 2026, BTGM recorded **14 substantive referral records** during the period. A wider anonymised review, extending to 10 August 2026, identified **24 client records**: **15 self-referrals** and **nine professional referrals**. The review found **10 appointment submissions representing nine apparent individuals**, **20 digital-inclusion requests representing 17 apparent individuals after deduplication**, and **16 structured client-note folders containing 61 entries**. Because these datasets may overlap, they must not be added together as a unique-client total. They demonstrate demand, particularly for housing support, mental-health and wellbeing assistance, advocacy, progression goals, recovery support and financial guidance.

The difference mentoring makes

The people BTGM supports often face several pressures at once: homelessness or insecure housing, substance misuse, offending histories, poor mental health, domestic abuse, low income, isolation, literacy difficulties and limited trust in services.

Progress is rarely linear. For one participant, success may mean sustaining accommodation or beginning volunteering. For another, it may mean opening letters, attending a vital appointment, resolving a benefits problem or remaining engaged after a setback. The common thread is having a consistent person alongside them who helps turn an intention to change into manageable practical steps.

Anonymised case study: From overwhelm to practical progress

Confidentiality and evidence note. *This case study draws on mentoring records. Names, dates, locations, practitioners, service providers and distinctive details have been removed or generalised. Only documented activity and progress are reported.*

Case at a glance: sustained regular mentoring; completed disability-benefit application; connected health and support services.

The client's situation

The client approached BTGM with overlapping mental-health, physical-health and practical difficulties affecting daily routines, home management, confidence with services and completion of a disability-benefit application. They needed coordinated support to turn several disconnected issues into a manageable plan.

How BTGM responded

The mentor provided regular, relationship-based support and turned broad concerns into achievable tasks. Support included:

- completing the disability-benefit form and organising supporting evidence;
- arranging, preparing for and attending a primary-care appointment so the client could explain their needs clearly;
- liaising with health, social-care and community services, supporting online systems and tracking follow-up actions; and
- reviewing goals around home organisation, daily stability and safe participation in work or activity.

Progress recorded

- **Benefit and administrative progress:** the application was completed with supporting evidence. The later decision was not recorded, so no award is claimed.
- **Improved access to healthcare:** a primary-care appointment was arranged and attended, enabling clearer discussion of the client's needs and further services.
- **Coordination, confidence and engagement:** the mentor connected practical, health and social-care issues and followed up delayed actions. The client remained engaged, used online tools with support and was later recorded as having improved spirits, while unresolved issues continued to be addressed.

Impact statement. The evidenced change was movement from multiple unresolved concerns towards a clearer plan, completed priority actions and stronger engagement. The case shows mentoring's value as a bridge between advice, services and practical follow-through.

What made the difference

- **Consistency:** one relationship held the different strands of work together.
- **Practical help and advocacy:** actions were completed with the client, not simply signposted.
- **Pacing:** complex problems were broken into realistic tasks and reviewed later.
- **Whole-person support:** benefit, health and daily-living needs were treated as connected.

Responsible interpretation. *Health follow-up, support at home and the benefit decision remained aoutstanding. BTGM enabled access, completion and coordinated engagement; it did not resolve every underlying difficulty.*

Fundraising and organisational resilience

The appointment of a CEO contributed to renewed fundraising and a marked improvement in income. Confirmed income rose in 2025–26.

This improvement represents momentum rather than financial security. BTG remains a small charity dependent on grants and vulnerable to short-term funding. The organisation continued to pursue trust and foundation funding, local opportunities, individual and community support and partnership bids.

The trustees' priorities are to diversify income, improve financial planning, build modest reserves and avoid disruption to mentoring relationships. Better evidence, clearer stories and stronger relationships with local and potential corporate supporters will form part of that work.

DEVELOPMENTS AFTER THE YEAR END

Following the end of the reporting period, BTGM brought together its operational work in a detailed client journey process covering referral through to closure. The process is intended to create a clear, consistent and safe pathway for clients, mentors, supervisors, staff and referral partners.

It sets out two principal pathways: standard mentoring, normally lasting up to 16 weeks, and shorter targeted support delivered on-site at Bethany House and Conway House. Targeted support focuses on an immediate practical issue and may lead to signposting, closure or progression into longer mentoring.

The process covers first contact, eligibility, triage, risk assessment, safeguarding, pathway decisions, waiting and engagement, mentor matching, the initial three-way meeting, goal setting, session records, supervision, review, non-engagement, complaints, planned and early closure, outcomes and data protection.

Supporting tools include a triage checklist, matching form, mentor feedback form, participant exit questionnaire, outcome and progress tool, risk assessment, action plan, website referral copy and a structured client-folder system. BTG also established service aims of contacting a new referral within five working days and, where someone is accepted for standard mentoring, seeking to arrange a first meeting within four weeks, subject to mentor availability and suitability.

This work represents a substantial strengthening of the charity's operational framework. As it was completed after 31 March 2026, it is presented here as a post-year-end development rather than as a completed achievement within the year.

BTGM also prepared for focused work on its organisational story, explaining more clearly the need it addresses, the distinctive value of mentoring and the difference made by a trusted relationship over time. This will be applied to the website and other referral, communications and fundraising resources.

Priorities for 2026–27

- Embed the end-to-end client journey, forms and procedures in day-to-day practice.
- Develop targeted and longer-term mentoring at Bethany House and Conway House.
- Recruit, train and support more volunteer mentors while protecting quality and safety.
- Improve participant outcome monitoring, feedback and case studies.
- Complete the story-development work and apply it to the website, referral information and fundraising.
- Deepen local relationships in Islington and Camden, including the Islington Access Hub.
- Strengthen the integrated pathway with Rehabit.
- Diversify income, improve forward planning and build suitable reserves.

FINANCIAL REVIEW AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Income for the year ending 31 March 2026 was £31,879, compared with £9,706 in the previous set of accounts. This significant increase followed the appointment of the charity's first CEO and the renewal of fundraising activity. The charity ended the period positively with a small surplus of £1,780 compared to the larger deficit seen in the previous year. This achievement reinforces our strategy of building a better financial position in the years to come and to enable BTG to being more sustainable and resilient to change.

Funders and grant income

Date received	Funder / income source	Amount
19 May 2025	Islington Borough	£399.50
13 June 2025	ACTIONFUNDER LTD.	£1,800.00
19 September 2025	Albert Hunt	£5,000.00
17 October 2025	TNLF Main Grants	£20,000.00
26 January 2026	Partner-Rehabit client costs	£600.00
2 February 2026	Islington Borough	£4,078.71
	Total grant income	**£31,878.21**

The exact total income, expenditure, annual surplus or deficit, restricted and unrestricted balances, year-end funds and reserves position should be inserted from the final 2025–26 accounts before filing.

Despite the improvement in income, the trustees recognise that BTG remains financially small and exposed to uncertainty. The board will continue to take a prudent approach to commitments, pursue a broader funding base and improve forward planning so that service quality and mentoring relationships can be protected.

The Trustees have determined that BTG should hold reserves which, in a funding crisis, would allow the organisation to carry on delivering services for six months whilst new major grants are applied for and which allow time and funds for longer term cost-reduction plans. Therefore, the Trustees aim to keep six months running costs in reserve amounting to approximately £ 10000.

DECLARATION

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity:

Signature: Greg Foxsmith (electronically signed)

Full name: Greg Foxsmith

Position: Chair of Trustees

Approval date: 1 September 2026

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bridging the Gap Islington

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bridging the Gap Islington ('The Trust') for the year ended 31st March 2026.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Lee Mathers MIAB, MCIOF (Cert)
Positive Community Finance Ltd
7 Scholars Rise
Stokenchurch
Buckinghamshire
HP14 3FL

28th August 2026

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

	Unrestricted Funds 2026 £	Restricted Funds 2026 £	Total Funds 2026 £	Total Funds 2025 £
Income Receipts				
Donations, legacies and grants	31,279	-	31,279	9,706
Other Income	600	-	600	-
Total Receipts	31,879	-	31,879	9,706
Expenditure Payments				
Cost of Charitable Activities	22,554	4,937	27,491	20,039
Cost of Administrative Activities	2,608	-	2,608	2,151
Total Payments	25,162	4,937	30,099	22,190
Net Receipts/(Payments) for the year	6,717	(4,937)	1,780	(12,484)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Total funds brought forward from previous year	4,535	4,937	9,472	21,956
Total funds carried forward at the end of the year	11,252	-	11,252	9,472

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILLIES AT 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	2026 £	2025 £
Cash funds			
Cash at bank and in hand		11,252	9,472
		11,252	**9,472**
Represented by funds			
Unrestricted funds			
General Fund		11,252	5,169
Restricted funds			
Postcode Society Trust		-	2,003
Steff Phillips Foundation		-	1,500
Islington Local Initiatives		-	800
		-	**4,303**
Non-monetary assets and liabilities			
Creditors due within one year		8,550	634
		8,550	634

No trustees or related parties were paid remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with the charity or a related entity. Trustee expenses have also not been incurred during the period.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Signature: 

Name: Greg Foxsmith

Date of Approval 1st September 2026

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2026

1: Basis of Preparation

These accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, with all revenue and expenses shown on a cash basis, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulation 2012 and Charities Act 2011. Non-monetary assets and liabilities are shown as estimates of the value at the end of the year.

2: Commitments and Guarantees

The Trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulation 2012, that at the year end the charity did not have any outstanding guarantees to third parties or any debts secured on assets of the CIO.

3: Income Receipts

All material incoming resources have been included on a receivable basis i.e. they are included if the receipt date falls within the period covered by these accounts. These receipts have been analysed using a natural classification.

4: Expenditure Payments

All material outgoing resources have been included on a receivable basis i.e. they are included if the payment date falls within the period covered by these accounts These payments have been analysed using a natural classification.

5: VAT

The charity is not registered for VAT and accordingly, expenditure includes VAT where appropriate.

6: Going Concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate (for example, whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern). The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. The charity is operating on a going concern basis.

7: Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are donations and other income received or generated by the charity's charitable purposes. Restricted general funds are to be used for specific purposes as set out by the funder/donor.