



4 November 2020

## Successful deployment of GPE COVID-19 Community Fund

Great Portland Estates plc (GPE) announces that it has now fully deployed the GPE COVID-19 Community Fund, donating £325,000 to vulnerable groups most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Fund was originally seeded with £280,000 raised through a combination of Board Director bonus reductions and fee waivers to the equivalent of at least 20% salary or fees for three months, along with contributions from all other GPE Executive Committee members. The remainder of the funds were donated by GPE employees. All amounts raised were matched by the Group.

Funds were allocated by the GPE Community and Charities Committee. In line with our purpose and community strategy, all donations were made to charities with a strong presence in London and which are being particularly impacted by COVID-19.

In total, 28 charities were supported, with a particular focus on homelessness, mental health, vulnerable groups and education. Key beneficiaries included:

- National Literacy Trust - supporting a virtual summer school and internship programme for disadvantaged teenagers in London who are most at risk of missing out on education, employment and training;
- Hestia – The Phoenix Project, a volunteer-led project to help survivors of modern slavery rebuild their lives and integrate into the community;
- Young Westminster Foundation – supporting the Brighter Futures programme, providing grassroots support focused on mental health and resilience, staying safe, education and lost schooling to improve social mobility; and
- London Wildlife Trust – to support the reopening of Camley Street Nature Reserve in 2021 to provide an ecological hub supporting outdoor learning and volunteering within the community.

For more on our wider community initiatives, see <https://www.gpe.co.uk/our-relationships/community-relationships/>

Janine Cole, Director of Sustainability and Community at GPE said: “It has never been so important to support community causes in their work to reach the most vulnerable. The Community and Charities Committee is therefore delighted to have been able to support those hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, through the donations of our Board, Executive Committee and the wider GPE team.”

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Laura Dowson, Deputy Director for Innovation and Partnerships at Hestia, one of our charity recipients said: "The COVID-19 pandemic has hit everybody hard, but none more so than the highly vulnerable victims of modern slavery in our services. Their fragile networks are destroyed, and many are at high risk of homelessness, re-traumatisation, chronic isolation, and re-trafficking. GPE's generous donation means Hestia can be there for these individuals. Their contribution will support the work of our award-winning Phoenix Project; a pioneering volunteer-led project to help adults (and their children) recovering from immense trauma to rebuild their lives."

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