

Basic Income Month

The impact of London Solidarity Funds and the case for local basic income schemes



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About the authors and collaborators

Cleo Goodman is the Co Founder and Project Director of the Basic Income Conversation.

Lewis Small has an MA in Anthropology and is currently conducting a PhD on basic income and the value of work in the context of automation, precarious work and the COVID 19 pandemic.

The [London Federation of Solidarity Funds](#) are a group of funds providing cash grants to people in their local communities. We collaborated with [SE15 Community Fund](#), [SE16 Community Fund](#), [Brent Solidarity Fund](#) and [Newham Solidarity Fund](#) on this project. A particular thanks to Rebecca, Alex, Jess, Katherine, Hannah and Andreea for all their work, both on this project and with the solidarity funds.

The research covered by this report is based on the information and insights shared with us by expensers of the solidarity funds we worked with. Thanks to Farrah and everyone else that gave us their time but preferred to remain nameless.



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About the Basic Income Conversation

The Basic Income Conversation is an initiative, powered by Compass, to promote the idea of a universal basic income in the UK. We work with people across civil society to understand the opportunities, questions and concerns around basic income. We help organisations decide if they should add basic income to their policy toolkit and look at how it fits alongside other big policy reforms. We work with researchers to ensure the basic income debate is informed by research. We help coordinate a growing network of cross party politicians and activists to put basic income at the top of the political agenda.

Introduction

This report outlines research into the impact of the London Solidarity Funds and the crowdfunded Basic Income Month that was run in December 2021.

The London Solidarity Funds issue monthly £50 payments to people in their local area on a postcode basis. These funds were set up by mutual aid groups who were responding to the COVID crisis and realised that there was a need for financial as well as practical support.

The Basic Income Conversation ran a crowdfunding campaign that paid for 71 people's payments from the fund in December 2021. We did an impact assessment of the solidarity funds through the lens of basic income to understand the similarities and differences in both methodology and impact.

The Basic Income Conversation and London Solidarity Funds developed this project because we saw it as an opportunity to learn more about basic income. The Basic Income Conversation also feel that it is crucial that the basic income movement has a real world impact while advocating for the policy. We wanted to contribute to the London Solidarity Funds that are delivering much needed financial support in a way that aligns with the principles of a basic income.

The London Federation of Solidarity Funds

The London Federation of Solidarity Funds is a community of financial support groups operating independently but cooperatively in London. The solidarity funds were set up during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide financial support to people as a component of mutual aid efforts.

“The fund was created out of a local Peckham-based mutual aid group when it became apparent that people needed help paying for their groceries as well as fetching them.”

The solidarity funds were set up by people who, largely through their work with mutual aid groups, saw the difference no strings attached grants would make for people. People who had been left without the cash they needed for food, topping up metres, mobile phone credit - hundreds of issues that could be solved with access to a bit of extra cash. The solidarity funds were set up as a single tool that

could help with the hundreds of different problems people in the community were facing.

“We were increasingly finding within our mutual groups that we were doing a huge amount of advocacy and casework for people. We were finding that people who could access services were kind of set up with services. What was coming to us was people who just needed cash.”

These funds were not set up as charity. The payments are a display of solidarity, the acknowledgement that anyone can be left short and that there is no shame in looking to your community for help. The solidarity funds can be used by anyone and the money can be spent on anything. They have emerged from the grassroots and continue to be led at this community level by local volunteers.

This is reflected in the language the funds use. The people who donate to and use the funds are referred to as “neighbours” or “expensers”. Using the fund does not make you a “beneficiary” as with charities that provide similar grants or Universal Credit’s “claimants”. “Expensers” indicates that the process of using the solidarity fund is simply a transaction that they have every right to make.

“We are not a charity - and it is important to us that we are not. We work from principles of solidarity inviting neighbours to give what they can and take what they need.”

The Goose Green Solidarity fund was the first to be established as an emergency COVID response. They began working with the Social Change Agency, who acted as the fiscal host for the solidarity fund and provided the [Open Collective](#) system for donations and expenses from the fund. As the fiscal host the Social Change Agency manage the money that the funds raise and distribute. This means the volunteers who run the funds don’t need to use personal bank accounts or go through the complex process of setting up a bank account.

Once one solidarity fund was established others took inspiration. The Open Collective platform and the lessons learned made the process of setting up the solidarity funds that followed a little easier. This process went on as the new solidarity funds continued to help others set up.

“We had heard about the SE15 Solidarity Fund so we asked them to come speak to us about how to set up a solidarity fund.”

The solidarity funds across London shared their processes and advice and this led to a cluster of solidarity funds serving the capital. Open Collective hosts funds around England, including in Cambridge, Arthur’s Hill, Elswick and Birmingham.

For the Basic Income Month project we worked with:

- [SE15 Community Fund](#)
- [SE16 Community Fund](#)
- [Brent Solidarity Fund](#)
- [Newham Solidarity Fund](#)

When we refer to the London Solidarity Funds throughout this report, it is this group of solidarity funds we are referring to.

We acknowledge that London could be considered a poor choice for the focus of this work due to the wealth of the city. However, it is also a city of great inequality. Like many parts of London, the inequalities in Peckham, the area covered by the SE15 Community Fund are stark. 44.4% of children are growing up in poverty in Peckham ward¹.

Newham has the highest number of households in temporary accommodation in London and half of children are judged to be in households in poverty^{1,2}. In the first national lockdown, Newham had the worst mortality rate in England and Wales³. The solidarity funds are a grassroots response that provides financial support to the people who are living at the sharp end of these statistics.

“Newham has experienced significant financial and social impact as a result of the pandemic - the lines for food banks are hours long and many residents have been unable to access financial support.”

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1. End Child Poverty (2021), “Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2019/20” Available at: http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Local-child-poverty-indicators-report-MAY-2021_FINAL-1.pdf
 2. Trust for London (2021), “Proportion of households in temporary accommodation in London boroughs (Q1)” Available at: <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/temporary-accommodation-borough/>
 3. ONS (2020), “Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation: deaths occurring between 1 March and 17 April 2020” Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deaths-involving-covid-19-by-local-areas-and-deprivation/deaths-occurring-between-1-march-and-17-april>

The Basic Income Conversation is also a small organisation with limited resources. We were put in touch with these solidarity funds directly. They were generous enough to agree to work with us on this project so we took this unique opportunity to make the case for a basic income.

The solidarity funds operate on a geographic basis. Anyone who lives in the area the solidarity fund covers can apply for payments. The Brent Solidarity Fund required a referral from a Brent Mutual Aid Group, the other funds can be applied to directly through Open Collective. Mostly the funds offer a monthly £50 payment.

The solidarity funds raise money in a variety of different ways including donations from the public, crowdfunding campaigns, fundraising events, business sponsorship and grants.

As of April 2022, the 4 London Solidarity Funds we worked with have disbursed a total of £107,066.54⁴. This would average out as over 2140 £50 payments.

*The four London Solidarity Funds have disbursed a total of **£107,066.54***

Part of this project was an impact assessment that would indicate some of the impact that this distribution of unconditional cash has made.

The solidarity funds face many challenges. As with any volunteer led project there is an enormous amount of unpaid work that goes into raising funds and administrating the payments. Some of the solidarity funds have not been able to sustain the work required to keep running, Brent Solidarity Fund are currently not operating due to a lack of capacity.

Raising the money that meets the demand for the solidarity funds is another big challenge. Most of the funds have had to close for periods of time to raise funds, impressively SE15 have managed to stay open since they first began. Unfortunately, the Goose Green Solidarity Fund closed due to funding challenges in December 2021.

The constant challenge that fundraising poses dictates how many people can receive payments each month and has meant the solidarity funds have developed policies on how they decide who will receive the payments. They have kept the payments as unconditional as possible and the policies on how payments are allocated are developed transparently and in consultation with the community.

4. This was the total of the “Total disbursed” through the Open Collective pages of the four London Solidarity Funds on Friday 15 April 2022. Available at: <https://opencollective.com/>

Raising funds and making payments at a grassroots level is incredibly difficult and unfortunately absolutely necessary. We have so much respect for what solidarity funds have achieved in the UK. And we are inspired. Inspired to do more that makes the case for a basic income and has a real world impact.

A basic income for all in the UK should reduce the need for this kind of grassroots action. But for now we are pleased to have made a small contribution to such important work.

This project

The Basic Income Month project was a crowdfunding campaign run by the Basic Income Conversation and London Solidarity Funds. 182 people made donations to the crowdfunder, these were then split between the four solidarity funds and distributed through the usual process in December 2021.

To understand the impact of the solidarity fund payments and the similarities and differences to a basic income we did an impact assessment. This consisted of a survey and 2 focus groups with people who had expensed one of the 4 solidarity funds. There were 28 survey responses and 6 focus group participants.

We also surveyed the people who donated to the crowdfunding campaign. There were 70 responses to the survey.

This report outlines:

- The impact of the funds based on this impact assessment
- Our analysis of the similarities and differences of the solidarity fund payments and a basic income
- An exploration of basic income data gathering exercises and studies
- A comparison of the solidarity fund impacts to the evidence on basic income
- A consideration of locally run basic income schemes
- An overview of how to set up a solidarity fund

Executive summary

The impact of the funds

<p>Food</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 96% of expensers spent some of the money on food. ● Cash was needed over food banks because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People and their children have specific dietary requirements. ○ People are unable to eat the food the food banks supply. ● The solidarity fund payments have motivated people to volunteer at the food banks. <p><i>“My youngest is autistic and he only eats specific food, stuff that does not come in the food bag that the mutual aid group sends.”</i></p>
<p>No recourse to public funds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The solidarity funds have disproportionately benefit people with no recourse to public funds due to their residency status. ● They have topped up the inadequate levels of financial support provided to people with no recourse to public funds. ● A basic income must carefully consider issues around citizenship and immigration to avoid similar downfalls. <p><i>“The payment that comes from local authorities is not enough... So when we get this money, at least we can feed ourselves and we can feed our babies as well.”</i></p>
<p>Motherhood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The solidarity funds disproportionately benefit mothers. <p><i>“I’ve been offered jobs that I can’t take because I’d be paying a huge chunk of my money to someone else to look after my children.”</i></p>

<p>Dignity and trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 96% of expensers said it was somewhat true (25%) or true (71%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Connected to my community”. ● There was a high level of appreciation for the solidarity funds due to both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The financial support. ○ The way the system operates. ● This appreciation was not extended to the existing social security system. ● 93% of expensers said it was somewhat true (39%) or true (54%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Able to deal with challenges I was facing in my life”. <p><i>“It's nice. It's respectful as well as very useful.”</i></p>
<p>Crisis point</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responses from expensers gave an impression of people close to or at crisis point. ● 96% of expensers who responded to the survey said it was somewhat true (25%) or true (71%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Less stressed”. ● 89% of expensers said it was somewhat true (46%) or true (42%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Financially secure”. ● 96% of respondents said it was somewhat true (21%) or true (75%) that “The solidarity fund offered me funding when I wasn't able to access it elsewhere”. ● The experiences of the people expensing the solidarity funds suggests that unconditional cash payments like a basic income have the potential to meet people’s needs. ● The most robust conclusion that we can draw from the information expensers shared with us is that people are currently being failed by our social security system. <p><i>“I would have resort to begging strangers on the road for money”</i></p>

Is this a basic income?

	<p>The payments made through the Solidarity Funds share some of the characteristics of a basic income, but not all of them. The London Solidarity Fund payments are an example of unconditional cash payments, not a true basic income.</p> <p>However, the principles of the solidarity funds and the nuances of their design bring them closer to a basic income.</p>
Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The London Solidarity Fund payments are cash. • Cash was a solution to a wide range of problems that services were currently not solving. • Investment in services is essential, but in the short term cash is a way to provide emergency solutions.
Unconditional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The London Solidarity Fund payments are unconditional. • This was our initial assessment and it was validated by the research. • 96% of expensers said it was true (78%) or somewhat true (18%) that “The criteria for applying were simple and easy to meet” • 96% of expensers said it was true (82%) or somewhat true (14%) that “I felt like I wasn't judged during the process” <p><i>“So I personally felt that it was unconditional. There were no questions asked, there was no judgement made.”</i></p>
Periodic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people receive the London Solidarity Fund payments periodically. • The need to apply each month and the fact that not everyone receives the payment each month means they cannot be considered periodic. • The payments are experienced as repeatedly available, which is closer to periodic than a one off grant:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 93% of expensers answered yes to “Do you feel like you could claim from the solidarity fund again if you needed it?” the other 7% answered not sure.
Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The London Solidarity Fund payments are not universal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They do not have the scope or the resource to make the payments to everyone in the areas they cover. ● They do operate on a postcode basis and, in theory, are universally available to everyone within that area who might choose to apply. ● The London Solidarity Fund payments are potentially more universally available than existing financial support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 96% of expensers selected true (75%) or somewhat true (21%) for the statement “The solidarity fund offered me funding when I wasn't able to access it elsewhere” ● Awareness of the fund is a significant barrier to it being considered universal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 22% of expensers selected false (11%) or somewhat false (11%) for the statement “I found out about the solidarity fund easily”
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The London Solidarity Fund payments were not individual.

Is this a basic income pilot?

This project is an impact assessment of a relevant intervention rather than a time limited basic income pilot.

This is more similar to studies of the Alaska Permanent Fund than pilots like the one in Finland.

Comparison to pilots and studies

- Finland:
 - The Finnish pilot used a payment similar to a basic income rather than a true basic income, like the solidarity fund payments.
 - 71% of expensers said they do not do any paid work, so this somewhat makes our research more comparable to the Finnish pilot which was targeted at unemployed people.
 - The Finnish pilot participants reported a higher level of trust in institutions, this is comparable to the increased appreciation for the solidarity funds in comparison to the existing system.
- Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration:
 - The community led nature of both projects is the key similarity between the Stockton Demonstration and London Solidarity Fund payments.
- Alaska Permanent Fund:
 - Our project used research into an existing intervention. This is similar to studies of the Alaska Permanent Fund dividend that was not intentionally implemented as a basic income, but is a true, permanent basic income that can be used to understand the potential impacts if the policy.
 - The size of the Alaska Permanent Fund dividends are dependent on the revenue generated by oil reserves. This is comparable to the London Solidarity Fund payments being dependent on funds raised.
- A key difference between our project and the other pilots and studies listed is the limited extent of the evaluation.

Local basic income schemes

A national basic income

- The lessons for a national basic income that we can learn from this project with the London Solidarity Funds are:
 - A basic income should carefully consider issues around citizenship and immigration so it can become a solution to the financial insecurity experienced by people with no recourse to public funds.
 - Access to bank accounts would need to be addressed in the roll out of a basic income.
 - The inadequacy of Universal Credit was only in part because of its conditionality. A low level basic income wouldn't necessarily avoid all of the shortcomings of the current system if there is still no way for people to access an adequate income.
 - For a basic income administered on a local level raising awareness of the existence of the scheme would be key.
- **97% of donors** were supportive of a national basic income implemented by the UK government.
- **70% of donors** thought a basic income should be funded through progressive taxation.
- **0% of donors** supported funding and allocating a basic income via an opt in system or cuts to other public services and benefits.

Local basic income schemes

- The London Solidarity Funds show us that it is possible to set up systems that are comparable to a basic income at a grassroots level.
- The challenges they face with funding and overwhelming demand show that this is no simple task.
- This approach could be a way of making a real world impact while also making the political case for a national basic income.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus group participants were generally supportive of a basic income scheme similar to the London Solidarity Funds in their postcode area, some thought it should remain an opt in system. ● There is less support for local basic income schemes than national ones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 74% of donors were supportive of a basic income set up at a local level (city/local authority/postcode) by local government. ○ 57% of donors were supportive of a basic income set up at a local level (street/city/postcode) by a community. ● However, the level of support for local schemes indicates that they could be adopted by the basic income movement as part of the campaign in the UK.
<p>A crowdfunded basic income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was little support for a crowdfunded basic income scheme. ● 36% of donors supported funding research into basic income, including pilots, through crowdfunding. ● The main motivations of donors were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demonstrate the impact of unconditional cash - 81% ○ Support the work of the Basic Income Conversation - 77% ○ Be involved with a basic income pilot - 52% ○ Provide people in need with cash - 29% ● This suggests that people can be motivated to support a crowdfunded basic income scheme through their support of a basic income and organisations working to secure one.

How to set up a fund

Things to consider when setting up a solidarity fund

- Admin team - the people that will help you set up and run the solidarity fund.
- Fiscal host - an organisational partner that has the infrastructure required to manage the finance side of the fund.
- Admin system - the platform you'll use to manage donations and make payments, Open Collective is built for this.
- Money - the fundraising activities you will do to secure the money for paying expensers.
- Finding expensers - how you will raise awareness of the solidarity fund so people who need it can access it.

Supporting solidarity funds

- You can support a solidarity fund by:
 - Making a donation
 - Getting in touch about volunteering your time
- You can find more information about the [London Solidarity Funds here](#).
- Search [Open Collective](#) or get in touch with local mutual aid groups to find out if there's a fund you can support in your area.

The impact of the funds

The main part of our research as an impact assessment of the solidarity funds. A survey was sent to people who had expensed the funds to ask them about their experience. We also hosted two focus groups.

The solidarity fund payments differ from a basic income. The themes and impacts outlined in this section are related to the funds specifically. Their relevance to basic income can be assumed based on the characteristics that are shared with a basic income and a comparison with existing evidence from basic income pilots, which are covered in the following sections.

Food

96% of expensers who responded to the survey said they spent some of the money on food.

The areas the solidarity funds serve each have a food bank. During the focus groups we spoke about how accessing food through food banks and using the solidarity fund payments differ.

“I'm an African lady. I go to the food bank at times, there are some tinned foods they give to me which I do not eat. So it was frustrating. I have to just return it. But with that solidarity fund money we were given, I was able to use it to get things that I want. I know it will be a waste of time if I go to the food bank.”

With the solidarity fund payments people were able to access the food they like. Sometimes this was personal preference, sometimes cultural and other times related to specific dietary requirements.

“My youngest is autistic and he only eats specific food, stuff that does not come in the food bag that the mutual aid group sends.

I will say the quality of food that the mutual aid group sends me is really high. They send me amazing fruit and veg, extras like really high quality bread. So if I didn't

have to consider my autistic five year old's needs, I could probably cope with that and what I buy using my Universal Credit.

But it's expensive to have an autistic child. Very expensive. Sometimes you need to get an Uber to get him to school, because he's not in the mood to get on the bus or he physically won't walk to the bus stop."

They also talked about choice, being able to balance the purchase of food with other expenses based on their needs at that point in time.

Both services were clearly well received and much needed. The community-led nature of them meant that people were able to help run the services as well as access them.

"I'm now volunteering at a food bank. I've been volunteering since August and it's been really enjoyable. I'm giving back to the community because I was being helped with the £50 a month.

It's really wonderful. I've met some good people."

No recourse to public funds

The funds have been a lifeline to people with no recourse to public funds in particular.

*If you have a residence permit that allows you to live in the UK, it may include the condition that you have **no recourse to public funds**. If so, it means you will not be able to claim most benefits, tax credits or housing assistance that are paid by the state.*

Public funds include a range of benefits that are given to people on a low income, as well as housing support. These are:

- *income-based jobseeker's allowance*
- *income support*
- *child tax credit*
- *universal credit*
- *working tax credit*
- *a social fund payment*
- *child benefit*
- *housing benefit*
- *council tax benefit*
- *council tax reduction*
- *domestic rate relief (Northern Ireland)*
- *state pension credit*
- *attendance allowance*
- *severe disablement allowance*
- *personal independence payment*
- *carer's allowance*
- *disability living allowance*
- *an allocation of local authority housing*
- *local authority homelessness assistance*⁵

Whether people can work in the UK depends on the type of visa they have, most asylum seekers are excluded from paid work⁶. If people are unable to work, or only able to work limited hours, based on their visa and have no recourse to public funds their access to any kind of income is very limited. Asylum seekers are provided with a place to live and a cash allowance that allows them to “meet their essential living needs”⁷.

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5. GOV.UK (Accessed 2022), “Public Funds”. Accessible here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds>
 6. Citizen's Advice (2022), “Check if you have the right to work in the UK”. Accessible here: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/right-to-work-in-the-uk/understanding-your-right-to-work/check-if-you-have-the-right-to-work-in-the-uk/>
 7. Home Office Blog (2020), No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPf). Accessible here: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/05/05/no-recourse-to-public-funds-nrpf/>

“You’ll be given somewhere to live if you need it. This could be in a flat, house, hostel or bed and breakfast.

You cannot choose where you live.”

- GOV.UK ⁸

The Minimum Income Standard gives us an idea of the level of income required to access a socially acceptable standard of living as defined by people in the UK. For a single working age adult excluding rent, Council Tax and childcare this is calculated to be £212.64⁹ a week. At £39.63⁸ the cash allowance asylum seekers are given is a small fraction of what is needed to provide a socially acceptable standard of living. Indeed this is also often true for people with access to public funds whose only source of income is through the social security system.

Pregnant mothers seeking asylum receive an additional £3 a week, mothers with babies under 1 year old receive an additional £5 a week and with children aged 1 to 3 an additional £3 a week⁸. The Minimum Income Standard calculates that a lone parent with two children aged 2–4 and primary school age needs £388.92⁹ a week excluding rent, Council Tax and childcare. £176.28 more than a single working age adult. A mother seeking asylum with children in those age brackets would receive only £3 more a week.

“For those of us who have no recourse to public funds, it [the solidarity fund payments] helps a lot. The payment that comes from local authorities is not enough to take care of yourself and your baby. If we add the solidarity fund money to it, at least it can support you for a week. Those of you who have been there before know what I’m talking about, it is not enough.

So when we get this money, at least we can feed ourselves and we can feed our babies as well.”

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8. GOV.UK (Accessed 2022), “Asylum support”. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/asylum-support/>
 9. Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2021), “A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2021”. Available here: <https://www.irf.org.uk/report/minimum-income-standard-uk-2021>

The acceptance of meagre levels of social security in the UK seems to be affecting people with no recourse to public funds most sharply. They are subjected to lower rates of support, exclusion from paid work and a complete lack of control over their housing options.

“Those seeking to establish their family life in the UK must do so on a basis that prevents burdens on the State and the UK taxpayer. It is right that those who benefit from the State contribute towards it... This has long been established as being in the public interest.”

- UK Home Office ⁷

The exclusion from support is justified by mandating that people contribute to the state to be able to access support from it. However, the conditions on paid work and the inadequate level of support can be a barrier to people being able to engage with public life, let alone contribute to it. Particularly when they have dependents such as small children.

The unconditional nature of a basic income is the embodiment of a shift in the values that underpin our social security system. A system where support is available based on human need, unconditionally.

If a basic income is going to have the social outcomes we hope it will, it needs to consider issues around citizenship and immigration carefully. We cannot ignore the deliberately hostile environment created for people seeking asylum in this country. This is a reflection of the culture that holds us back from implementing a basic income in the first place. It is one with a serious human cost.

Motherhood

Most of the people we spoke to during the focus groups were mothers with young children.

“I've been offered jobs that I can't take because I'd be paying a huge chunk of my money to someone else to look after my children.

I won't see my children and I'd have to be out there working for next to nothing”

The essential work that these mothers do raising their children left them without an adequate income. Childcare costs are high and make taking up paid work either unappealing or unaffordable. The solidarity fund payments went some small way towards helping these mothers cover the costs for their families.

“It's really about being disabled from joining the workforce rather than not wanting to join the workforce.”

Some pilots have shown that mothers of young children that receive a basic income spend more time with their children. This leads to improved health outcomes for those children¹⁰. It is undeniable that raising children is essential work. Childcare turns this into paid work, but with an increasing cost of living this becomes a less viable option for parents. A basic income could allow parents to spend time raising their children, rather than pushing them arbitrarily into paid work.

Dignity and trust

96% of respondents said it was somewhat true (25%) or true (71%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Connected to my community”.

The community led nature of the fund is a key feature. Local people creating solutions to problems within the community sends a powerful message of solidarity. People spoke about being put in touch with the solidarity funds by friends and other community organisations. The solidarity funds became another touch point for the community.

We heard throughout the focus groups and surveys a sense of gratitude for the solidarity funds. We were told that interacting with the solidarity funds and the people who run them was a positive experience.

“It's nice. It's respectful as well as very useful.”

10. Lancet Public Health (2020), The public health effects of interventions similar to basic income: a scoping review. Accessible here: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30005-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30005-0/fulltext)

This differs from the expenser's experiences of the existing social security system. Social security payments may be more dependable and paid at a higher rate, but the system that delivers them and the fact that they are not enough to afford a decent quality of life deeply affected the people we spoke to.

“We've had to live on Universal Credit and you have no idea how horrible this payment is.”

93% of respondents said it was somewhat true (39%) or true (54%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Able to deal with challenges I was facing in my life”. Through the focus groups we found that this was due to the choice that the unconditional nature of the payments afforded them.

“That money gives you the power, the freedom to make choices, good choices.”

The level of payment was not high enough to solve all the financial issues people faced. But it was enough to address some of the challenges faced that could be solved with a bit of extra cash.

The expensers felt they were trusted with the solidarity fund payments and afforded the dignity of spending the money on what they needed without judgement.

Crisis point

The responses to **“Describe how things would have been different for you without the solidarity fund payment/s”** gave an impression of people close to or at a crisis point.

“It would have been very, very hard. Thank you so much for the fund. I am very glad I could access it.”

96% of expensers who responded to the survey said it was somewhat true (25%) or true (71%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Less stressed”.

“I would certainly be a lot more stressed”

89% of respondents said it was somewhat true (46%) or true (42%) that the solidarity fund made them feel “Financially secure”

“It would put me even more behind each month than I already am”

96% of respondents said it was somewhat true (21%) or true (75%) that “The solidarity fund offered me funding when I wasn't able to access it elsewhere”. This suggests that the financial support available from other sources was either inadequate or inaccessible. The solidarity fund offered financial support when it was unavailable elsewhere, the stories we were told showed that this was a lifeline for expensers.

“I would have really suffered, I feel this has been my lifeline. Whenever I had nothing, the Newham Solidarity Fund helped me to get through the really tough days which I am so so grateful for.”

The solidarity funds were set up at a grassroots level as a direct response to a national crisis and the awareness that people in the local community were struggling financially. This nature of the solidarity funds makes them essentially an emergency fund. This differs significantly from a basic income which is designed to be a stable foundation of income for every citizen.

In theory a basic income would make it less likely that people would reach crisis point. This indeed is the purpose of a social security system generally.

The experiences of the people expensing the solidarity funds suggests that unconditional cash payments like a basic income have the potential to meet people's needs. However, the most robust conclusion that we can draw from the information expensers shared with us is that people are currently being failed by our social security system.

People are left without food to feed their babies, unable to pay essential bills. They are in a position where access to £50 through a community project led by local volunteers is the only thing that stands between them and begging strangers in the street.

“I would have resort to begging strangers on the road for money”

The Cost of Living Crisis is not an abstract concept. It is something that people live through each day. The solidarity funds and all the people who interact with them have built something that embodies the idea of basic income. Operating with the values of a basic income, albeit with many practical differences. This is why we wanted to present the impacts of the solidarity funds alongside the idea of a basic income. It is not perfect, but it is good.

“Without the solidarity fund life would have been a little harder. This fund has been a lifesaver to me and my children and I will forever be grateful to SE15 Community Fund.”

Is this a basic income?

A basic income is a regular cash payment delivered to everybody, regardless of their personal circumstances. Basic income schemes differ in money paid, who's eligible and the number of people receiving it. According to the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN), a true basic income must have the following characteristics:

1. **Periodic**—It is paid at regular intervals (for example every month), not as a one-off grant.
2. **Cash payment**—It is paid in an appropriate medium of exchange, allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in kind (such as food or services) or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use.
3. **Individual**—It is paid on an individual basis—and not, for instance, to households.
4. **Universal**—It is paid to all, without means test.
5. **Unconditional**—It is paid without a requirement to work or to demonstrate willingness-to-work.

So, are the London Federation of Solidarity Funds providing a basic income?

The payments made through the Solidarity Funds share some of the characteristics of a basic income, but not all of them. The London Solidarity Fund payments are an example of unconditional cash payments, not a true basic income. However, the principles of the solidarity funds and the nuances of their design bring them closer to a basic income.

Cash

The most widely understood feature of a basic income is that it is cash. It is a payment made in currency that can be spent in the same way as an income earned from paid work or any other source.

The London Solidarity Fund payments are also cash. The reasoning behind that is aligned with the principles of basic income. The provision of a cash payment provided people with more choice, flexibility and security. It was an appropriate way to meet a wide variety of needs at a community level that were identified by the mutual aid groups who set up the funds.

“I have been trying to access dental care since last year. I cannot because it's fully booked. They told me I can come as a private patient, if I pay £60. If I have the money I can go out and fix it.

*[With the payment from the London Solidarity Fund]
Even if I had said that I wanted to buy groceries, if I realise my teeth are bad I can go do what I need to do.*

I'm still using it for something sensible, it's something useful. That money gives you the power, the freedom to make choices, good choices. You've got opportunities and alternatives.”

Although there are services that can and do meet various needs, we found that the cash payments were currently filling gaps where services are falling short. People who depend on public services for things like gas end up paying more than people using private services.

“I pay more for gas than the average person who's getting a bill because I have to top it up using the gas card.”

Investment in public services so they can meet people's basic needs would be a better solution than ever increasing drains on personal incomes. The extension of public services is a key component of a long term solution. However, many people have already reached a crisis point and additional cash can have a marked impact. It can be flexibly allocated to the most pressing need without external intervention.

The solidarity fund in my local area makes me feel financially secure

True - 43%

Somewhat true - 46%

Somewhat false - 4%

False - 7%

A key claim of basic income is that it would provide financial security and indeed this is something that is experienced by pilot participants¹⁰. 89% of the expensers who completed the survey said that the solidarity fund in their area made them feel more financially secure. This indicates that access to even small sums of money can provide an increased sense of financial security. It is possible that this is particularly true of these payments due to their similarity to a basic income.

Unconditional

Perhaps the most important principle of a basic income is that it is offered unconditionally. This means that people are not expected to do anything in return for the money that they are receiving. It is quite clear that an hourly wage is not unconditional, you receive it on the condition of doing an hour's work. Usually we cannot consider Universal Credit to be unconditional as there are requirements placed on "claimants" to apply for a certain number of jobs and check in with the job centre. As part of the COVID response these conditions were lifted and Universal Credit briefly became an unconditional benefit.

"I'm on Universal Credit at the moment. I have an autistic child and I'm trying to get a job or restart my business, but I'm still required to go to the job centre every week. They want so much of my time just because they give me this payment at the end of the month. There's so much pressure coming from them, but they also never give me any help to actually get a job or to actually find a way to restart my business."

From discussions with the people who set up and administrate the funds we felt the London Solidarity Fund payments were unconditional. The fund payments were not made on the condition of anything being given in return. We wanted to check if people expensing the funds experiences the payments as unconditional to ensure this judgement was true.

The criteria for applying were simple and easy to meet

True - 78%

Somewhat True - 18%

Somewhat false - 4%

False - 0%

We asked this to understand whether people felt there were hoops they needed to jump through to claim the payments, as this could be seen as a condition on the payment. 96% of the expensers that responded indicated that the criteria for applying were simple and easy to meet.

I felt like I wasn't judged during the process

True - 82%

Somewhat True - 14%

Somewhat false - 0%

False - 4%

As the funds are led at a community level we felt that judgement through the process of expensing the fund could be experienced as a condition. Expensers could feel there were expectations of them that weren't explicitly stated but would influence whether they received the payment. 96% of the expensers that completed the survey said that they felt like they weren't judged during the process.

We asked the question about unconditionality more directly in the focus groups. After discussing the concept we asked participants if they felt the payments had been unconditional. All of the focus group participants said they had experienced the payment as unconditional. There was reference to some delays in communication or payments, but acknowledgement that this was due to the challenges of the funds being administered by volunteers rather than a condition on payment.

“So I personally felt that it was unconditional. There were no questions asked, there was no judgement made.”

From the conversations with expensers we are confident that these payments are made unconditionally. This is a key characteristic of the London Solidarity Fund payments, as well as a basic income, and strongly influences the way these payments impact the people that receive them.

Periodic

A basic income is paid periodically, usually every week or month, this is what makes it an income rather than a one off cash payment or grant. The intention of a basic income is to guarantee everyone a level of financial security, so the regular payment is key.

The London Solidarity Fund payments are made once a month. There is also a monthly application process for expensers meaning it may be a different group of people that receive the payments each month. Some of the solidarity funds have people that expense the funds each month if they need to. These people experience the funds as a regular payment, although as there is an application process each month this differs from a basic income which would be paid automatically. Other funds have implemented policies that limit the number of times someone can expense the fund.

We asked the expensers that were surveyed:

Do you feel like you could claim from the solidarity fund again if you needed it?

Yes - 93%

Not sure - 7%

We wanted to understand whether the payments were experienced as repeatedly available. A payment that is repeatedly available based on need is closer to a regular payment than a one off.

93% of people surveyed answered “yes” and the other 7% answered “not sure”. This indicates that the payments are experienced as repeatedly available, although the people who answered not sure suggest this is not explicitly felt or understood by everyone expensing the funds. The funds are delivered at a community level by volunteers; the high level of confidence in the payments being repeatedly available could stem from a positive experience of interacting with the funds when expensing.

“I really appreciate what Newham Solidarity is doing for me.”

The payments cannot be considered periodic. The availability of the payments is ultimately contingent on the money each solidarity fund is able to raise, this determines how repeatedly and regularly available the payments are. The London Solidarity Funds operate on an opt-in system, even if there was the budget for regular payments for all expensers, the regularity of the payments would depend on how often people apply, it would not be a consistent weekly or monthly payment like a basic income.

Although some people receive repeated payments, the number of times expensers receive payments varies. Therefore what we learn about basic income from the London Solidarity Funds does not include lessons about the regular nature of the payment.

Despite this, the payments seem to provide an increase in the feeling of financial security for expensers through the knowledge that the payments are available when needed.

Universal

A basic income is universal, meaning it is paid to everyone within a geographically defined area regardless of their circumstance. This is the most infamous and controversial feature of the policy. The reasoning behind making a basic income universal is to ensure that no one slips through the cracks. To make sure that everyone has access to some level of income and through a single policy an income floor that no one can fall beneath would be created.

The London Solidarity Fund payments are not universal. They do not have the scope or the resource to make the payments to everyone in the areas they cover. They do operate on a postcode basis and, in theory, are universally available to everyone within that area who might choose to apply.

The solidarity fund offered me funding when I wasn't able to access it elsewhere

True - 75%

Somewhat true - 21%

False - 4%

We asked this question to understand whether the London Solidarity Fund payments were more universally available than other sources of funding. 96% of people that completed the survey said they were able to access funding through the solidarity fund when they were unable to access it elsewhere, this indicates it is more universally available than other sources of funding.

I found out about the solidarity fund easily

True - 53%

Somewhat true - 25%

Somewhat false - 11%

False - 11%

As the London Solidarity Funds operate on an opt-in basis, awareness of their existence is a key indicator of how “universally” accessible they are. The experience of expensers here is not the best way of assessing how easy it is to find out about the solidarity funds because they are already aware of them. However, even within this group we see that 22% of people say it was not easy to find out about the solidarity funds. This is another indicator that the solidarity

funds are not universal, as it suggests the level of awareness in the wider community would be low.

This is not a bad thing within the context of how the funds currently run, they already have more demand than they can meet due to funding constraints and work with partners in the community to ensure that the people who are most in need are made aware of them. However, if we are using the funds as a model for a basic income administered on a local level raising awareness of the existence of the scheme would be key.

I felt like the solidarity fund was for me

True - 71%

Somewhat true - 25%

Not sure - 4%

How universal an opt-in system is depends on how many people feel entitled to the payment. For a system to be truly universal everyone should feel entitled to it. This is somewhat true of a basic income, although it would be paid automatically whether people felt entitled to it or not. It is unlikely we will be able to make the political case and implement a basic income until the majority of people feel entitled to this kind of payment.

We asked expensers to rate the statement “I felt like the solidarity fund was for me” to understand how entitled to the payment they felt. 96% of people who completed the survey said this was true or somewhat true. This is unsurprising, they expensed the fund so they must have felt that this was something that was available to them. It is unlikely the entire community within the postcodes covered by the solidarity funds would feel this way. Many would feel that this was for people more in need than them, even if the money would make a difference to them. Again this is not an issue for the solidarity funds as this self selection helps them meet demand. However, if the budget was unlimited it would be important to convince people they were entitled to the payments if they were intended to be universal.

In theory that the openness of the funds encourages people to apply to the funds when they are in need, even if they don't feel they are the most needy.

“I'm not overly dependent on the fund, however it's a big stress reliever.”

Understanding how well the opt-in system works for the London Solidarity Funds could help us explore whether this is ever an appropriate feature of a basic income, particularly one led at a local level.

Individual

A basic income is paid to the individual, rather than the household like many existing benefits, to ensure everyone has access to an income of their own. This allows people to make their own decisions about how they spend their money. Women in particular experience the negative impacts of not having an income of their own when payments are made to a household rather than each individual within that household.

To manage the challenges posed by having limited funds for payments the solidarity funds stipulate that only one person within a household can claim the payment each month. Applications for payments are made by individuals and the payments are then made to individuals based on the details provided. Therefore, the solidarity fund payments do not share this characteristic with a basic income.

Is this a Basic Income pilot?

In this section we look at basic income pilots. We will give an overview of how basic income pilots are designed and the design of this project with the London Solidarity Funds to explore how they compare to basic income pilots.

We will also consider recent basic income schemes and how they went about assessing the impacts of a basic income, including how well they meet the 5 characteristics of a basic income. We consider the similarities between them and the London Solidarity Funds, to understand how relevant the funds are to understanding a basic income. The following schemes were selected as they were conducted in similar political and economic contexts to the London Solidarity Funds, and therefore offer the best points of comparison.

What is a Basic Income pilot?

Basic Income pilots are scaled-down, time limited basic income schemes designed to test the effect that a basic income would have. They are usually implemented by a national or local government. More recently, pilots have been set up by campaign groups, local communities and charities to test basic income, provide people with much needed cash unconditionally and to make a political statement about the need for a basic income for all.

Answering the question,

What effects does a basic income have?

with a pilot is even harder than you might think because it is very difficult to replicate the characteristics of a basic income in a pilot.

A true basic income is universal. It would go to everyone within a geographical area, probably one that is defined before the basic income is implemented e.g. a country or a city. As pilots attempt to answer questions about the impacts of a basic income without rolling out a permanent scheme to a large number of people, it is very difficult to replicate the universal nature of a basic income.

Many of the impacts of a basic income are likely to occur because everyone in a community receives it. For example a group of people who all get a basic income and decide to set up a business will have a very different experience to a group of people who don't get a basic income, or a group where only one person gets a basic income. If a pilot is not universal and does not pay a basic income to

everyone within a geographically defined area, like a town or postcode, you don't learn anything about these community level effects.

Very little evidence on this has been collected. Often pilots are targeted at a specific group (e.g. care leavers as in the forthcoming Welsh pilot). Or they choose random individuals within a community to receive a basic income rather than giving it to everyone.

For the purposes of this section we acknowledge that a basic income that is not universal is not truly a basic income and therefore pilots that are not universal are not the best test of the impacts of a basic income. However, on an individual level if a payment is unconditional, paid to the individual, in cash and regularly then it is that person's basic income. So a pilot can pay people a basic income while not testing a *universal* basic income.

A basic income would also be permanent. People would receive it throughout their life and this would affect them differently at different stages of their life. As pilots are time limited and only run for a couple of years they tell us very little about the effect a basic income for life would have.

The method of paying for a basic income would also have an effect on the behaviour that results. If certain groups end up paying more taxes their behaviour will change too. Pilots do a poor job of collecting data on these effects as they do not replicate the funding mechanism.

Designing a basic income pilot

The question “what effects does a basic income have?” is actually lots and lots of separate questions. Questions like “how does basic income affect health?”, “how does basic income affect the way people work?”, “does basic income affect people of different genders in the same way?”. You could come up with hundreds of questions.

For each question you need to collect enough information to confidently propose an answer. The process of collecting and analysing data is expensive and time consuming. So pilots tend to pick a small set of questions (the research priorities) to answer based on what they are most interested in.

Despite the challenges, there are lots of ways to design basic income pilots that give us useful information about the impact a basic income might have. The conclusions we draw from that information are based on a set of assumptions.

For example, you might run a pilot with 1000 people in the UK and **assume** that that group of people's behaviour is similar to how everyone in the UK would act if they got a basic income. Then you can monitor specific aspects of their behaviour, (e.g. how much paid work they do while they receive a basic income) so you can come up with an answer to a question you're interested in answering (how does a

basic income affect the way people work?). It is ok to base your answers to the question on assumptions. In fact these assumptions are a key component of experiments of all kinds, but you need to be pretty confident your assumptions are true!

Understanding what happens during a basic income pilot

Collecting data that we can be confident answers our questions is considered at every stage of designing a pilot. This data is how we understand what happened during the pilot. Once you have your questions and set of assumptions you can decide what you're going to count i.e. what data you're going to collect as part of the evaluation of your pilot.

The more of one type of data you collect, the more you can trust it e.g. you can be much more confident that a basic income caused people to start more businesses if you give a basic income to 1 million people, than you can be if you give it to 1 person.

You also need to be sure that the basic income is the factor that is influencing the behaviour you're monitoring. You can do this by using a control group. A control group is a group of people that are in a similar situation to the people participating in the pilot. They would live in a similar area, be of the same range of ages, have the same range of incomes etc. You collect data from the people in the control group and compare it to the data collected from the people receiving the basic income. If there are behaviour changes that are caused by the basic income the data will be different.

Returning to the example of the 1 million people receiving a basic income. You would need to compare the number of people per million that start a business in the control group to the number of people with a basic income that have started a business. If more people receiving a basic income start a business you might start to think that it's the basic income causing this wave of entrepreneurship.

Statistical significance is key to ensuring we are confident in the answers the evaluation of a pilot gives us. If the data collected shows a certain effect is statistically significant we can be confident it was caused by the basic income. Determining whether something is statistically significant is a complicated and technical process that we won't go into too much detail about here! But this is considered throughout the design and analysis of a pilot. For example it would be used to decide how many people need to participate in a pilot to understand how the population as a whole might behave. It would also be used to decide how many people need to be in the control group to be sure the behaviour of pilot participants is a result of the basic income.

This is how we really work out whether the basic income is causing more people to start businesses. If you can show that the higher number of entrepreneurs in

the basic income group is statistically significant you can be pretty confident that these two things are related.

Answering questions about basic income with pilots

A basic income pilot is the process of giving people a basic income and collecting data on the impacts this has, using all the tools discussed above. A study is the analysis of relevant data, both data on the pilot participants and other data the pilot can be compared to. Multiple studies might be done on one pilot.

A study can also use data from multiple pilots. In fact this is how we get an idea of the answer to the question “What effects does a basic income have?”. Or more accurately, how we compile the answers to the many different questions that describe effects a basic income has. When we compare all the many pilots and see things that happen consistently across all of them we can be pretty confident that these are the effects a basic income has.

The challenge with this is that pilots tend to have very different designs, including the type of data that is collected. This often means it is difficult to compare that data from different studies to draw trustworthy conclusions. For this reason it is best to use commonly collected data (e.g. census data) and recognised frameworks as part of the evaluation of a pilot. This would increase the amount of data we can compare across different basic income pilots. We could also compare more basic income pilots to large samples of data about people who do not receive a basic income to see if they behave differently.

Any differences in the design of different basic incomes could lead to different impacts. Different locations may also respond differently to a basic income. So the answer to “what effects does a basic income have?” should be more specific, “What effects does **this** basic income have **in the UK?**” for example.

Understanding basic income without pilots

Pilots are not the only type of project that can be used to understand a basic income. As we have already seen, basic income pilots do not entirely replicate a true basic income. They create a similar set up that is carefully accompanied by research and evaluation so we can make assumptions about what would happen when a true basic income is rolled out.

Some projects or policies don't set out to implement a basic income, but end up with an intervention similar enough to a basic income that we can use it to understand the potential impacts of the policy.

The two key things an intervention needs to be useful to understanding a basic income are:

- A design as close as possible to a true basic income i.e. possessing as many as possible of the core characteristics: cash, regular, individual, universal, unconditional
- Really good data that assesses the impacts of the intervention. Everything we outlined above about how to collect good, relevant data for basic income studies applies here too.

These are the two key things that determine how good the design of a pilot is. But applying them to other interventions could open up a whole host of relevant data that helps us understand the impacts of basic income, without having to go through the challenging political process of getting a pilot off the ground.

London Solidarity Funds

The London Solidarity funds and this project fall more into this latter category of a relevant intervention than they do a basic income pilot. The London Solidarity Funds existed in their own right, with their own objectives before the idea of using them to better understand basic income was proposed. They had been set up to have similar characteristics to basic income, not explicitly to make the case for basic income, but because the mutual aid groups that set up the funds felt this was the best way to meet the needs of their communities.

We outlined in some detail how closely the London Solidarity Fund payments resemble a basic income in the previous section.

In the context of understanding basic income through pilots and other relevant interventions, this is enough overlap with the policy to be relevant.

However, the level of resource accessible to the funds poses a challenge. The level of payment is low, so the impacts are small and difficult to assess. Although we have been told it is not too low to make a difference, it is too low to provide very robust data without extensive evaluation that we did not have the resource to perform.

There is also the issue of consistency of payment, both resulting from the payment not being regular by design and the challenges the London Solidarity Funds face with raising money for the payments. Some expensers will only have received the payment once it is unlikely this relatively small intervention would have a marked impact on behaviour.

The challenges the funds face with raising enough money to meet the need for the payments has led to many difficult and unwelcome decisions about how the funds are allocated. Rather than being able to make the payments to everyone who applies each month the fund admins have had to come up with policies for

deciding how available funds are allocated. Despite this, the unconditional nature of the payments has largely remained.

This project used a qualitative assessment of the impacts of the funds, with self report surveys and focus groups. These methods are commonly used during pilot evaluations, but they are usually accompanied by more rigorous quantitative data that we did not have access to as part of this project (e.g. medical records, information regarding employment). We also did not have a control group that we could compare the responses to.

Our research should be considered as an impact assessment rather than a full evaluation of the London Solidarity Funds and how they compare to basic income.

Because there is a relatively solid foundation of data collected on basic income pilots and other relevant interventions we used this to develop the impact assessment. We were interested in seeing if similar themes arose here as in the evaluation of basic income pilots.

We believe that this is an innovative piece of research. Despite its flaws we are keen to see more assessment of existing interventions to understand basic income in the UK.

We still seem to be some way off a pilot in the UK and even if one started tomorrow we would have to wait for the results. The UK context can be assessed, by much more capable academic practitioners than ourselves, using existing data. The priority for us was to put a spotlight on work that is being done that we feel is very much aligned with the ethical principles of a basic income and to ensure the people who have received fund payments are listened to. Their expertise on their own experience should be put at the heart of the solutions to the cost of living crisis.

Basic income pilots

The Finnish pilot

In 2015 newly elected Prime Minister of Finland Juha Sipilä released his government's programme of work. It included a basic income pilot¹¹.

11. Prime Minister's Office, Finland (2015), "Finland, a land of solutions - Strategic Programme of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government" Available here:
https://vnk.fi/documents/10184/1427398/Ratkaisujen+Suomi_EN_YHDISTETTY_netti.pdf/8d2e1a66-e24a-4073-8303-ee3127fbfcac?t=1434628244000

Finnish Government is committed to policy experimentation as they see this as a feature of representative democracy. The Finnish pilot was the first modern, western pilot. The governments that went on to pilot basic income were influenced by this commitment to experimentation, even if they do not apply the same methods to their consideration of policies other than basic income.

The purpose of the basic income pilot was to explore whether a social security system that was more like a basic income would “promote more active participation and provide a stronger incentive to work”¹². So the question the Finnish Government sought to answer initially was “is there a stronger incentive to do paid work when people receive a basic income?” rather than “what effects does a basic income have?”. They were more interested in reforming their social security system to incentivise paid work than they were implementing or understanding a basic income.

There were a number of pilot models proposed in the early stages, some that would have been more useful to help us understand the impacts of a true basic income. The one that was taken forward involved 2,000 randomly selected people who received an unemployment benefit. As the pilot only involved unemployed people the question it was able to answer essentially became “do unemployed people in Finland work more when they receive unconditional benefits?”. The pilot was also designed to collect data on well-being, financial security and trust in people and government institutions.¹²

Do unemployed people in Finland work more when they receive a basic income?

The pilot was delivered by the Finnish social security agency Kela. This meant the pilot could be delivered in a very similar way to the existing unemployment benefits, and therefore the differences between the basic income and the benefits could be studied very closely. The employment of the basic income pilot participants was monitored in the same way as it was for everyone receiving unemployment benefits in Finland. This made all unemployed people in Finland except those participating in the pilot the control group for this part of the evaluation. Because the pilot was administered by Kela it could also be compulsory. This meant the pilot could be a randomised control trial, where participants are chosen entirely at random. Randomised control trials are considered the best practice for experiments.

12. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Finland (2019), “The basic income experiment 2017–2018 in Finland, Preliminary results” Available here: https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161361/Report_The%20Basic%20Income%20Experiment%2020172018%20in%20Finland.pdf

Key points about the Finnish basic income pilot:

- The pilot was not designed to replicate the universal nature of a basic income, so it is limited in what it can tell us about the policy
- Between January 2017 and December 2018 2,000 randomly sampled people receiving an unemployment benefit aged 25 to 58 received a monthly cash payment of €560.
- The payments were set at the same level as benefits, this tested whether removing the conditions from these benefits would incentivise work.
- The researchers leading the pilot requested to extend it, this was rejected. The pilot was not cancelled as was widely reported.
- The pilot was evaluated through a register based statistical analysis for employment impacts, which produced very robust data.
- Other impacts were evaluated using surveys, this is a less robust process.
- Pilot results:
 - Employment:
 - “The employment effects were small. This indicates that for some persons who receive unemployment benefits from Kela the problems related to finding employment are not related to bureaucracy or to financial incentives.”
 - Well-being:
 - “Survey respondents who received a basic income described their wellbeing more positively than respondents in the control group.”
 - “They were more satisfied with their lives and experienced less mental strain, depression, sadness and loneliness.”
 - “They also had a more positive perception of their cognitive abilities, i.e. memory, learning and ability to concentrate.”
 - Financial security:
 - “respondents who received a basic income had a more positive perception of their income and economic wellbeing than the control group.”
 - “They were more likely to find that their financial situation is manageable and that they are protected financially.”³
 - Trust:
 - “The basic income recipients trusted other people and the institutions in society to a larger extent”
 - They “were more confident in their own future and their ability to influence things than the control group.”¹³

13. Kela (2020), “Results of Finland’s basic income experiment: small employment effects, better perceived economic security and mental wellbeing”. Available here: https://www.kela.fi/web/en/news-archive/-/asset_publisher/IN08GY2nrZo/content/results-of-the-basic-income-experiment-small-employment-effects-better-perceived-economic-security-and-mental-wellbeing

The pilot did not show that paying unemployment benefits as a basic income increased employment. So, a basic income would not necessarily incentivise work as Finnish Government hoped. But as the amount of people in paid work did not decrease, i.e. as work was not disincentivised, this suggests that a more conditional system is no more effective at incentivising paid work. This is an argument in favour of a system more similar to a basic income.

The conditions on benefit payments require resource to enforce, if they are not effective then a cost saving can be made. Also, the removal of conditions seemed to lead to a number of positive impacts: improved well-being, more trust in people and institutions and a greater sense of financial security. Retaining conditions does nothing to increase engagement in paid work, yet they cost more to administer and create a worse experience for the people that use the system.

The Finnish experiment differs greatly from our work here with the London Solidarity Funds. We collected very little information on employment as part of our project. When asked “Will the payment from the solidarity fund affect any paid work you do?” 71% responded “Not applicable - I don't do any paid work”. This suggests our results are somewhat more comparable with the survey data from the Finnish study as we are largely hearing from unemployed people. 18% responded “I will work the same amount”, which is validated by the results of the Finnish pilot which saw no great change in work.

We also saw a high level of trust in the solidarity fund system, that was contrasted with a poor experience of the government's income support systems such as Universal Credit. The people expensing the funds also reported an increased feeling of financial security due to the availability of the fund payments. Both of these insights are aligned with the results of Finnish pilot.

The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED)

The Stockton project is different from other basic income pilots in that it was a demonstration rather than a pilot. It sought to demonstrate the impact of a basic income by collecting data and working with the people of Stockton to communicate the way basic income had affected people in their city.

The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration is a collaboration between the Office of Mayor Michael Tubbs, the Economic Security Project, the Reinvent Stockton Foundation, and the residents of Stockton.

The demonstration was launched in February 2019. For 24 months payments of \$500 were made to 125 Stocktonians over the age of 18. The payments were paid to the individual, in cash at regular intervals with no conditions attached to the payments, sharing four key characteristics with a basic income.

The Stockton demonstration was targeted at people whose incomes were lower than the average median income for Stockton as a whole. Therefore it was not universal. 4,200 households were invited to participate in the pilot. 125 people from these households who volunteered to participate were randomly selected to receive the basic income payments.

The Stockton demonstration states it was:

“born out of the simple belief that the best investments we can make are in our people.”¹

The team leading the demonstration expected that the basic income would have positive impacts on the participants. They developed robust evaluation methods to test whether this was true. They had three research questions:

- 1. How does [basic income] impact [income] volatility?*
- 2. To what degree do changes in income volatility alter financial well-being, psychological distress, and physical functioning?*
- 3. How does [basic income] generate agency over one’s future?¹*

The decision to target the demonstration at Stocktonians with lower incomes was made because the project had a limited budget. The group implementing the demonstration knew only a relatively small number of Stocktonians would receive the payments. They wanted them to be the ones that would benefit the most.

It is unfortunate that the Stockton demonstration didn’t have a greater commitment to universality, as this is the feature of a basic income we understand the least. But this project was about investing in people in Stockton and demonstrating the positive effects of this to secure permanent, systemic change that benefits Stocktonians. The various partners and people of Stockton felt this was the right way forward for them.

The Stockton demonstration had a “treatment group” of 125 people who received the payments. An “active control group” who didn’t receive payments but were compensated for participating in the data gathering exercises. And the “passive control group” who weren’t aware of their membership of this group, but whose administrative data were compared to the rest of the groups.

25 people joined a group that speak publicly about the demonstration. This is a mix of participants receiving the payments and members of the active control group, who didn’t receive a basic income but were involved in the project. They

work with the researchers and the politicians who are leading the demonstration to communicate the results.¹⁴

This is an important feature of the demonstration, giving participants a voice and ensuring the results aren't viewed as abstract data but information about real people's lives. This helps translate the research component of the demonstration into real world policy recommendations.

It is rare that this information from pilots is communicated by the people it actually relates to. It's possible that insights are lost when the information has to pass through the researchers evaluating the pilots. There are also ethical questions as to whether it is fair to turn people into experimental subjects for global scrutiny without ever allowing them to become an active part of the discussion. The Stockton demonstration was built around the voices of Stocktonians.

The design of the Stockton demonstration is innovative. It has already inspired many similar projects across the USA.

Key points about the Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration:

- The project was a demonstration, meaning it was designed to collect data and tell the story of how Stocktonians could be better supported financially.
- The demonstration was not designed to replicate the universal nature of a basic income, so it is limited in what it can tell us about the policy
- Between February 2019 and January 2021 125 Stocktonians with below the average income in Stockton received a monthly cash payment of \$500.
- Qualitative and quantitative data was collected on participants and two forms of control group at intervals throughout the 24 month period.
- Key findings from the first year of the demonstration:
 - “Guaranteed income reduced income volatility, or the month-to-month income fluctuations that households face.”
 - “Unconditional cash enabled recipients to find full-time employment.”
 - “Recipients of guaranteed income were healthier, showing less depression and anxiety and enhanced wellbeing.”
 - “The guaranteed income alleviated financial scarcity creating new opportunities for self-determination”¹⁵

14. Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (2019), “Pre-Analysis Plan Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration”. Available here: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6039d612b17d055cac14070f/t/605029f652a6b53e3dd39044/1615866358804/SEED+Pre-analysis+Plan.pdf>

15. Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (2019), “Preliminary Analysis: SEED's First Year”. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6039d612b17d055cac14070f/t/6050294a1212aa40fdaf773a/1615866187890/SEED_Preliminary+Analysis-SEEDs+First+Year_Final+Report_Individual+Pages+.pdf

As with the Finnish pilot the Stockton demonstration is very different to the work we did with the London Solidarity Funds. The key similarity is the community driven nature of both projects, although there are also some big differences here too. While the Stockton demonstration was based on the active involvement of the participants the solidarity funds consciously avoid making demands of expenser's time. However, both of the projects are built around a commitment to greater investment in people within their communities.

The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend

The state of Alaska in the USA has a basic income. Since 1982, the state-owned Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation has been paying an annual cash dividend to all Alaskan residents.¹⁶

The dividends are from profits from oil revenues. The payments vary in size depending on the size of the oil revenues that year, they have ranged from \$1000 up to \$2,072 per person per year.¹⁰

The payments are paid universally to all residents of Alaska who have been living in the state for a full calendar year, and intend to continue living there indefinitely. They are paid regularly, although this is an annual payment rather than weekly or monthly. The payments are cash that is paid to the individual without conditions. This means it has all five characteristics of a basic income.

The Alaska Permanent Fund is a true basic income, but below subsistence level. This means that it is too little to live off. A lower level of payment will have fewer impacts, an annual payment will also provide less financial security than a more regular one.

What can the Alaska Permanent Fund tell us about basic income?

The Alaska Permanent Fund is an incredibly useful source of information about the impacts of basic income. Because the entire state receives the basic income we can learn about the community level effects. The behaviour of Alaskans who receive a basic income can be compared to the rest of the USA using data collected for the entire population. Numerous studies that investigate these impacts have been done.

16. Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation (Accessed 2022), "History of the Alaska Permanent Fund". Available here: <https://apfc.org/who-we-are/history-of-the-alaska-permanent-fund/#:~:text=Governor%20Jay%20Hammond%20signed%20a%20was%20distributed%20two%20years%20later.>

Key points about the Alaska Permanent Fund:

- The Alaska Permanent Fund is a true, permanent basic income that every resident of Alaska receives annually.
- It was implemented to share out the profits made from oil revenues across the state.
- The payments fluctuate each year based on how much is made from the oil revenues.
- Many studies have been done using the large amount of data available on the residents of Alaska to understand how the basic income impacts them.
- Impacts of the Alaska Permanent Fund payments:
 - Health:
 - Low birth weight rates were reduced and birth weights increased with the level of payment.
 - Some groups had lower levels of obesity in young children.
 - A simulation model showed every dollar paid in dividends led to 20–92 cents lower health-care expenditure.
 - Mortality rates related to substance abuse increase in the period after the payments are made.
 - Work:
 - The payments have minimal impacts on how much paid work people do, different studies have shown no reduction or small reductions.
 - Increased part time hours worked.
 - Increased demand and consumption has led to an increase in men in paid work.¹⁰

As the London Solidarity Funds existed before the work we did to assess their similarity to a basic income, our project is in some ways most similar to the studies of the Alaska Permanent Fund. However, the studies in Alaska tend to use large data sets that can be compared to other data collected around the USA, rather than small scale qualitative assessments like ours.

The payments in Alaska are dictated by the content of the Alaska Permanent Fund, i.e. how much has been raised by the oil revenues and how this divides between the population. There are parallels here with the London Solidarity Funds, although of course the schemes differ significantly in terms of resource. The source of funding for the Alaska Permanent Fund is much more reliable than the London Solidarity Funds and involves much greater sums of money. The Alaska Permanent Fund is also protected by the constitution of Alaska, any changes to the constitution need to be voted for by the majority of the population.¹⁶ The London Solidarity Funds have no such protection.

Local basic income schemes

The London Solidarity Funds can be seen as a challenge for the basic income movement. We should consider what it would look like if we, quite literally, put our money where our mouth is. The implementation of a national basic income is a long term political project. There is a strong grassroots element to the basic income movement, made up of people who could take matters into their own hands. Local basic incomes could play a role in making the case for a basic income for all in the UK and make an impact in the short term.

The shift to basic income demonstrations, pilots led by communities that collect data and make the case for a basic income, is a similar strategy. But a local basic income would be a permanent fund rather than a short term pilot.

The Basic Income Month was a month of London Solidarity Fund payments paid for through a crowdfunder led by the Basic Income Conversation. We asked our supporters to donate to the Basic Income Month and followed up with a survey to understand why they donated and their opinions on funding models for basic income policies and pilots. This section includes some insights from the donors to the crowdfunder and what these might mean for the basic income movement.

A national basic income

When considering the impacts of the London Solidarity Fund payments, and any small scale scheme similar to a basic income, we expect that these impacts would be amplified if the scheme was implemented at a national level.

We cannot confirm this from our research alone. But we can take the lessons learnt from the impact assessment of the solidarity funds into our advocacy for a national basic income.

The inadequacy of Universal Credit was noted. This was only in part inadequate because of the conditionality of the system. The level of payment is also key. A low level basic income wouldn't necessarily avoid all of the shortcomings of Universal Credit and the current system if there is still no way for people to access an adequate income.

It was clear how detrimental having no recourse to public funds was for the people who expensed the funds. It seems key that a basic income is not classed as public funds if it is to address this issue.

Not having a bank account was a big issue for people expensing the funds, this would need to be addressed in the roll out of a basic income.

If we want a basic income to be a true safety net these specific nuances are not sidenotes they are central facets of the policy.

When considering a national basic income scheme we need to think about the funding model. This is a more developed discussion than funding a local basic income so we turned to the donors to the crowdfunder for insights.

97% of the donors were supportive of a national basic income implemented by the UK government.

How supportive are you of: A national basic income implemented by the UK government

Supportive 4 - 84%
3 - 13%
2 - 1.5%
Opposed 1 - 1.5%

70% of donors thought a basic income should be funded through progressive taxation. 6% supported funding through changes to the income tax and benefits system that DO significantly increase public spending and 6% supported funding through changes to the income tax and benefits system that DO NOT significantly increase public spending and another. None of the donors supported funding and allocating a basic income via an opt-in system or cuts to other public services and benefits.

Local basic income schemes

The London Solidarity Funds show us that it is possible to set up systems that are comparable to a basic income at a grassroots level. The challenges they face with funding and overwhelming demand show that this is no simple task. But this approach could be a way of making a real world impact while also making the political case for a national basic income.

We asked the focus group participants what they thought about a scheme that turned the monthly £50 payments of the solidarity fund into a basic income for everyone living in their postcode. They said they thought these payments would be a great help to many.

“It would make a huge difference. I was talking to a friend recently and she was saying that, although she works, sometimes at the end of the month after she

pays her bills, her house rent, the gas and all that she's left with almost nothing. She would cry and cry.

So for somebody like that, although she's working, that £50 a month would make a lot of difference.”

It was noted that awareness of what financial support you're entitled to from the council currently is low. But that would not be the case with a basic income that was paid automatically.

“What I discovered was there are a lot of things that the council can help you with that they don't advertise.

So if there was a basic income that was well administered, it would really help a lot of people who do not have access to the information that I have access to now.”

Some people felt that a scheme of this kind would be more effective if it retained the opt-in system. Ensuring that the people who need the money most are prioritised.

I'd rather this system where you actually apply because you need it. So if you don't need it, you don't apply for it.”

The donor survey showed that respondents were less supportive of a locally administered basic income. The level of support for a basic income set up by a local government was significantly lower than a national basic income run by the central government.

How supportive are you of: A basic income set up at a local level (city/local authority/postcode) by local government

Supportive 4 - 50%
3 - 24%
2 - 17%
Opposed 1 - 9%

There was the lowest level of support for a local basic income set up by a community.

How supportive are you of: A basic income set up at a local level (street/city/postcode) by a community

Supportive 4 - 29%
3 - 29%
2 - 17%
Opposed 1 - 25%

The lower levels of support for local schemes came from concerns about how these would be funded and administered. The existing pressures on local government were noted and it was suggested that this could cause a locally run basic income to be particularly vulnerable to political shifts. Some people felt that the familiar model of a national basic income was the model worth pursuing.

“I am concerned that schemes run on a local/community/council level might introduce disparities between areas and the potential for a 'postcode lottery'.

I think it's important for basic income to work equally across the UK.”

However, there was still significant support for the idea of local schemes. The responses to the survey suggested an open mindedness from the basic income movement to smaller scale actions we could take in the short term. Some felt that these local projects could be a feature of the implementation of a basic income across the UK.

“Start small. Monitor, review and cancel or grow exponentially”

As the survey respondents had donated to the Basic Income Conversation crowdfunder we can assume some knowledge of basic income and of course there will be a much higher level of support for basic income than in the average population. This is an interesting insight for the basic income movement that is trying to move the UK closer to a basic income for all.

“Try anything to get basic income done!”

A crowdfunded basic income

There was little support for an opt-in basic income system, such as crowdfunding, from our donors. However, 36% said they supported funding research into basic income, including pilots, through crowdfunding.

We wanted to understand why they donated so we could better understand what motivations a crowdfunded basic income scheme could be built around. We asked donors to select up to three answers to the question:

Why did you donate to the crowdfunder?

To support a fund in my local area - 0%

Provide people in need with cash - 29%

Support the work of the Basic Income Conversation - 77%

Demonstrate the impact of unconditional cash - 81%

Support the work of the solidarity funds - 9%

Be involved with a basic income pilot - 52%

Do something that mitigated the impact of the COVID crisis - 3%

Show solidarity to the people who expense the funds - 6%

Other - 6%

The responses to this question suggest that people can be motivated to support a crowdfunded basic income scheme through their support of a basic income and organisations working to secure one. The London Solidarity Funds are usually funded by local people who want to support their work, however 0% of the donors who completed our survey donated to support a local fund. Likely because they were not from an area covered by one of the solidarity funds.

We are not clear on the motivations of the usual donors to the solidarity funds. However it is possible there would be parallels with the donors to the Basic Income Month, in that they would largely be motivated by the mission of the project and a sense of support for the project itself.

Our experience with this crowdfunding campaign and our conversations with the funds lead us to believe that crowdfunding would be a very challenging model for running a basic income fund. However, there is clearly a large audience of people wanting to contribute to this kind of work and some of these people are able to make financial contributions. We are very grateful to those people who made the Basic Income Month possible through their donations.

How to set up a fund

This report outlines how crucial the financial support provided by the London Solidarity Funds has been for people. It has also shown the similarities and differences of the fund payments to a basic income.

Anyone willing to take on the challenges of fundraising and resourcing a solidarity fund can set one up in their community. There's a growing number of people with experience of successfully running a fund to learn from. [Open Collective](#) is an established platform that can be put to work with support from the Social Change Agency.

This section briefly outlines the things you need to think about if you feel compelled to set up a solidarity fund in your community.

We would love to see projects like this continue to make the case for a basic income, and assume if you're reading this it's likely because you want to see a basic income in the UK. Solidarity funds could provide payments that are even closer to a basic income by making them individual and regular. Perhaps one day a community will set up a fund that provides a universal basic income to everyone living in an area of the UK... Of course we would prefer to see a national basic income for all as soon as possible.

Things to consider when setting up a solidarity fund

Admin team

Your team is where things will start. Find people that will help you with everything that running a solidarity fund entails - fundraising, partnership building, finding expensers, raising awareness of the funds and administrating payments. Ideally think about the various skill sets you will need in the long term but it's likely you'll start with a small and strong team that will be able to get things off the ground.

Fiscal host

You will need a fiscal host for the solidarity fund. This is the organisation that takes responsibility for the finance side of things, primarily managing the bank account that will hold the funds.

It is possible to incorporate as an organisation and set up a bank account, or even to hold the funds in a personal account. But this is best avoided. Holding the money in a personal account can cause all sorts of problems for that person and isn't an appropriate way of managing the solidarity fund's finances. Setting up a

bank account for the solidarity fund requires a lot of time and effort, you'd need to think about adopting a legal organisational structure. Finding an organisation that will partner with you and act as the solidarity fund's fiscal host is a tried and tested solution. Get in touch with the Social Change Agency to see if they will work with you.

You want to consider this before diving into fundraising activities. Donations from the public need to go somewhere and if you're applying to funders they will want to know you have this side of things handled.

Admin system

Your admin system will manage donations and payments to expensers. [Open Collective](#) is a tool that is designed with solidarity fund management in mind so this is what we would recommend you use.

Money

Of course the solidarity fund will need money to operate. This is where you can get creative and think about a variety of different fundraising activities. It's only possible to do so much but having multiple methods of raising funds will help make sure you've always got money coming in and that you're not dependent on one method of fundraising that might be exhaustible.

Think about reaching out to your local council to see if they will supply some funding, they often have a budget for emergency funds for the community which is very similar to what you would be setting up. Speak to local businesses and see whether they will contribute. You can run fundraising events and crowdfunding campaigns.

Do be aware that any fundraising activities aimed at the community are likely to raise awareness of the solidarity fund and people may start getting in touch asking how they can expense the fund.

Finding expensers

Awareness of the solidarity fund will be key to its impact. Think about the organisations and networks in your community that will reach the people who need the fund - food banks, mutual aid groups, community organisations. Get in touch with them and discuss how you can work together to promote the fund.

Consider how many people you will be able to help with the funds you have raised and use this to inform the way you promote the fund. Unfortunately, it's likely you will soon be met with more demand than you can meet. Work with your community to decide how to manage this fairly, solidarity is about more than just the payments.

“I definitely felt that we could have been open sooner. Don't try and think of absolutely everything that could possibly happen, because it might not and you can't possibly plan for everything. Just copy what another fund has done and change things as you go along.”

- Advice from a solidarity fund admin

Supporting solidarity funds

The London Solidarity Funds we worked with were all born out of the response to the COVID crisis. But financial support is just as crucial as ever. If you're considering setting up a solidarity fund, all the best to you! Let us know if there's anything else we can do to support you.

If you would like to support an existing solidarity fund you can make a donation or offer to volunteer. You can support the [London Solidarity Funds here](#) or get in touch with local mutual aid groups or search Open Collective to find out if there's a solidarity fund in your area.

Conclusion

The impact assessment of the London Solidarity Funds showed they are providing much needed financial support to people. Speaking to the expensers showed the extent of the cost of living crisis and how unconditional cash can alleviate the challenges this poses to some degree. This indicates that a national basic income would provide many people with an increased degree of financial security.

We found that the solidarity fund payments were often used for food. That they disproportionately benefited mothers and people with no recourse to public funds. The payments made people feel less stressed, more financially secure and more connected to their community.

We found that the solidarity fund payments differed from a basic income in several ways. The payments did not fulfil all of the characteristics of a basic income and the precarity of a community led model is quite far from the national policies we usually propose as a basic income model. But the principles of the solidarity funds somewhat make up for these differences. They are a grassroots solution to the same problems a basic income aims to solve - providing access to unconditional cash to give people with a guaranteed level of financial security.

We explored the similarities between this project and other basic income pilots and studies. Drawing comparisons to the Finnish pilot, the Stockton demonstration and Alaska Permanent Fund. We suggested that the examination of existing interventions in the UK that are somewhat similar to a basic income could be a useful source of evidence that is less complicated to generate than a pilot, and potentially more relevant.

We looked at the idea of local basic income schemes, what we can learn from the London Solidarity Funds and how they could be adapted to be more like a local basic income. We found that donors to the Basic Income Month were less supportive of local schemes than they were national basic income policies but that there was still a sufficient level of support to consider local basic income schemes a viable campaigning tool for the basic income movement.

We provided some insights into how to set up a solidarity fund and ways that you can support existing funds. The work of solidarity funds in the UK will only get more crucial as we move deeper into the cost of living crisis.

This project has provided us with some valuable challenges to the campaign for a basic income in the UK. It has compelled us to think more carefully about how we can make the case for a basic income for all, while having a positive impact on people in the short term.

Join the Basic Income Conversation

A basic income goes to everyone so it should be built by everyone. Join the Conversation and have your say.

DOWNLOAD THE TOOLKIT

basicincomeconversation.org/page/toolkit



BasicIncomeConversation