



**£20,844  
RAISED**

**58 ORGANISATIONS  
HELPED**

**600 HOURS  
VOLUNTEERED**

**950+ PEOPLE  
HELPED**

## **STAFF ENGAGEMENT**

97% improved wellbeing, 97% improved job satisfaction,  
91% had fun, 61% learned new skills

## **THE BACKGROUND**

“Over the past couple of months we’ve seen so many of our young people struggle, not only financially, but also mentally. Isolation, loneliness, uncertainty... all of these exacerbated the multiple issues care-experienced young people already had to deal with prior to the pandemic.” In May 2020 Lucy Elamad of Drive Forward Foundation (DFF) succinctly captured the challenges that were being felt not only by the care leavers supported by DFF, but by so many people across the UK.

DFF are one of Tideway’s charity partners, who all faced the ‘double whammy’ of major reductions in their income as fundraising events were cancelled alongside an increase in demand for their services. They weren’t alone—analysis by Pro Bono Economics estimated that one in 10 UK charities faced bankruptcy in 2020, with a £6.4bn loss of income just as demand for extra services—ranging from health to debt advice and social care—piled on extra costs of £3.7bn.

Tideway moved quickly to support its charity partners when the pandemic first hit. Payments under funding agreements were accelerated to help cash flow, donations were made to emergency appeals and restart/recovery programmes were supported, including a summer water sports programme for children from Tower Hamlets at Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre and a campaign to provide essentials to people leaving prison with our partner Bounce Back. But the gap in funding for charities and the demands on them continued to grow.

As the project safely re-started, planning began on how to re-energise our charity fundraising and volunteering programmes, engaging those staff working from home as well as site teams working in new, challenging circumstances. The ‘hook’ to launch the campaign was Tideway’s fifth birthday, based on the anniversary of the project’s licence award on 24 August 2015. The twin aims of the campaign were to have a positive, measurable impact on communities, in particular on our charity partners and to engage staff from across the Tideway Alliance, generating a ‘buzz’ around the event and get positive feedback from those taking part.

## THE CAMPAIGN

Make a Difference ran for just over a month from 24 August – 25 September 2020. The campaign organising team was led by Tideway's Corporate Responsibility team and included Main Works Contractors, local delivery teams and the staff Charity Committee.



The schedule included fundraising events, volunteering opportunities and opportunities to donate. The volunteering element combined organising socially distanced events in London and promoting support groups offering 'close to home' support for local communities. For fundraising events, an online giving 'hub' page was set up on Virgin Money Giving, to which all team and individual pages were linked. Tideway's staff charity partners—DFF, Single Homeless Project (SHP) and South London Cares (SLC)—were promoted as the main beneficiary charities but staff could raise money for any cause close to their heart. Staff were also actively encouraged to get family and friends involved too, with some activities created to be 'child friendly' and inclusive. This was to help staff and others motivate one another and to ensure that no matter what people's situations were, they could still feel able to take part in the fun! The following pages are some of the 'highlight' events throughout the campaign.



## FUNDRAISING – THE TUNNEL CHALLENGE

Tideway staff were given a charity challenge to walk, run, cycle, swim or row—in fact pretty much any outdoor activity they could think of—in teams or as individuals with the aim of completing as many 25km ‘lengths’ of the Thames Tideway Tunnel as possible.

More than 70 people covered a total of 16,176km or 647 tunnel lengths, with a couple of the leading individual contributors covering almost 1,000km each. Fiona Hoskins (pictured) did a Stand Up Paddleboarding challenge, Monica Lobo (pictured) covered her tunnel lengths by ‘plogging’—running and stopping to pick up litter—and Jamie Gray (pictured) climbed Britain’s three highest peaks!

The challenge proved very successful at both raising money—with more than £6,000 raised—and engaging staff, with many of the high scores from the campaign’s impact survey coming from participants.



## FUNDRAISING – DINE AND DONATE

Staff recreated their favourite restaurant meal and donated the cost they would have paid to Tideway’s staff charity partners. The results were mouth-watering, from single gourmet dishes to tasty but easy three-course meals, with more than £1,000 raised.



## FUNDRAISING – ‘YOU’RE ON MUTE’ CHALLENGE

We have all done it—started speaking while on mute in a video conference meeting. Tideway’s LGBTQ Encompass network decided to make a virtue of this during the campaign, asking people to donate £1 to their chosen charities Diversity Role Models and the Albert Kennedy Trust for their campaign fundraisers. To prove the point that it happens a lot, they raised more than £300!



## VOLUNTEERING – THE BIG COUNT

One of Tideway's main charity partnerships is with environmental charity Thames21, centred on the Thames River Watch programme which engages with riverside communities to collect and count plastic litter from the foreshore at locations up and down the River Thames.

One of the biggest events in the programme's schedule is the twice-yearly 'Big Count', when groups collect and count litter from multiple locations on the same day. Because of lockdown the 2020 autumn Big Count had to be changed to happen over a week, at fewer locations and with smaller numbers of volunteers. Tideway volunteers carried out surveys and clean-ups at four locations along the tidal river, giving teams the chance to meet up for the first time in months.

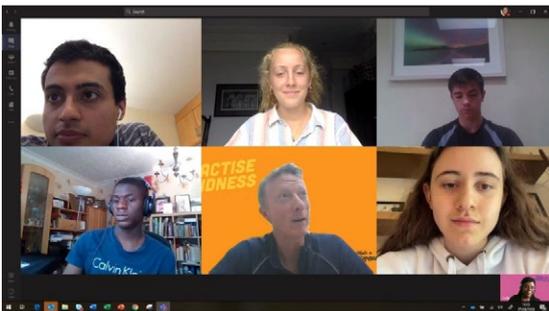
Tideway Community Investment Manager Kelly Bradley, who co-ordinated Tideway's events and led one near Putney, said: "I didn't realise how much I missed collecting litter from the foreshore! It was great to see our Putney site and to see some colleagues. We collected 9 bags of rubbish, 148 bottles and 65 of those are water bottles. What a great way to spend my Friday afternoon".



## **VOLUNTEERING – VIRTUAL CAREERS WEEK**

Run by Tideway's Skills and Employment team, this week-long event saw 17 to 18-year-old students from across London given an insight into the Tideway project and STEM-based careers. The team at the project's King Edward Memorial Park site in Wapping provided an overview of its engineering and offered insights into their own career journeys, ranging from those who have spent more than 10 years in engineering to a current apprentice.

After hearing about several other career paths based on roles from sustainability and architecture, to corporate responsibility and digital communications, the students completed a sustainable design challenge and presented their design, receiving praise from the Tideway team. One of the students, 18-year-old Umar Khan, said: "I've learnt so much from Tideway's staff."



## **DONATIONS – ADOPT A PUPPY**

Staff working on the Central section of the project decided to support Guide Dogs and ask colleagues to make donations so that they could sponsor a puppy into training.

They raised enough to support two puppies, Marley and Sprout (pictured), to be trained for two years until they are fully qualified guide dogs. The pair then featured on 'Pets Corner' in the weekly internal e-news brief, with Marley 'quoted' as saying: "Thank you to everyone who has given Sprout and I the wonderful chance to fulfil our ambition to become guide dogs - we are so grateful."

We have since heard from Guide Dogs how they have both been progressing. Marley has been learning the ropes from retired guide dog Grace and behaves perfectly whilst walking on the lead and Sprout is doing fantastically in his training and has quickly picked up new commands.



# THE IMPACT

## ON THE COMMUNITY

The 600 hours volunteered during the campaign supported our key partners and also gave direct help to the community. One highlight was the 53 hours volunteered for Thames21's Thames River Watch programme, including four events during the week of The Big Count. Covid-19 has increased the impact of single-use plastic, with our volunteers on average finding 322 pieces of plastic per 100m. There were more plastic gloves observed than face masks and one section of the foreshore on the Isle of Dogs had 29 gloves per 100m, well above the average for the river and suggested they are beginning to accumulate at this location. AJ McConville of Thames 21 said: "It was so good to see a large number of Tideway people volunteering for our annual TRW Big Count. Their support has been instrumental in the success of the TRW programme and our work is even more important now we are seeing a huge increase in Covid-19 related plastic waste on our precious foreshores."



Another was 12 Tideway volunteers supporting a group of 17 to 18-year-old students for Virtual Careers Week, giving them an insight into the Tideway project and STEM-based and other careers. The positive feedback was summed up by 18-year-old Phoebe Anderson, who said: "I just wanted to say the biggest thank you for the most incredible few days of work experience. It was so beneficial to hear the Tideway team's journeys into the role as well as their day to day jobs".

The campaign raised £20,844 for a total of 20 charities, including more than £10,000 from staff and a similar sum in Tideway donations and matched giving. The total was double the original £10k target for overall funds raised. The campaign helped 58 organisations and more than 950 people.

The biggest beneficiaries were Tideway's three staff charities and the money has helped them to deliver much-needed support to 155 of the most vulnerable members of society.

Over £5,000 was donated to Single Homeless Project allowing them to provide move-out packs to 10 individuals moving into their own accommodation so that they are set up with the basics. An additional 31 move-in packs were given to welcome individuals moving into an SHP hostel. Tideway also donated £400 worth of food from the closed cafe at its London Bridge office, which was used to feed the residents of SHP's emergency hostel in Camden. Tara Carty from SHP said: "It's great to see and hear of the great things you all achieved and as always we are truly grateful for all your support throughout the year. We are proud to have you as a partner."



Almost £5,000 was donated to the Drive Forward Foundation, allowing them to deliver a Young Professionals Programme. This personal and professional skills development programme, specifically designed to cater for the professional needs of young people starting the Civil Service Care Leaver Internship, offers 40 young people workplace support and includes conflict resolution courses which help to increase their general resilience. Lucy Elamad of DFF said: "We genuinely could not have done this without you!"

About £2,000 was donated to South London Cares which they used to tackle the isolation felt by older neighbours in Southwark with a big focus on their 1:1 Love Your Neighbour befriending service, but also continued support through fun virtual social clubs as well as tending to the one-off needs of their neighbours. Jodie Goffe of SLC said: "The money you have raised during your Make a Difference campaign is going to keep older and younger neighbours connected this winter."

One of the key aims of the campaign was that its events and causes would support inclusivity and a range of different causes. Staff selected charities that represented causes in sectors such as health (including Macmillan Cancer Support and Endometriosis UK) social welfare (including Bounce Back and Trinity Homeless Projects) and youth engagement (including Urban Synergy and London Youth Rowing).

The LGBTQ+ Encompass network's 'You're on Mute' fundraiser is a great example of inclusivity and allowed Diversity Role Models to engage with 75 young people through a one-hour educational workshop in schools. One Year 8 pupil who attended the charity's workshops said: "I will help LGBT+ people if they are getting bullied or picked on for being themselves. It doesn't matter if you are gay, straight or transgender. People who love and care about you will still support you."

The money raised for Endometriosis UK was an impressive effort by only two of our staff and the funds that they raised will pay for up to 23 helpline volunteers who will help an even larger number of women suffering from the condition. This is what they had to say when they found out about our donation: "Please pass on our huge thanks and

appreciation to Andeep and Ama for not only raising a fantastic amount of money but for also raising awareness within the workplace. We know how hard it can be to speak up about a subject that is often seen as taboo especially in such a male-dominated sector. We are so grateful for all your donations, especially given the current climate. We are finding that women with endometriosis need our support now more than ever as so many waiting lists for surgery are on hold. Your donations mean that we can continue to be there for those affected by endometriosis by providing support and reliable information as well as campaigning for change and raising further awareness.”

The Trinity Homeless Projects was chosen by Tideway’s Head of IS Fiona Hoskins, who volunteers from them in a trustee role. She raised the most money as an individual and was awarded with a special match funding prize helping her to raise nearly £900 for Trinity Homeless Projects, which will help 30 individuals. Trinity said that “we’re extremely fortunate to have Fiona on our team—and 25k on a paddleboard! Thanks so much for your sponsorship and donation, we will be using this for an essential part of our service that is not only unfunded but helps to put a smile on the face of our new resident when they first move in.”

Women’s Aid was selected by Tideway’s Encompass Gender Group in recognition of the increased difficulties that some women and children have faced during the pandemic. The charity said: “This generous donation will help support all of our work for women and children experiencing abuse. Our combination of campaigning, research, training and direct services creates real change in the response to domestic abuse and can be life-saving for survivors.”

Knowing that all of these charities will put these funds towards the greatest needs and things that will make the biggest impact, gave the campaign team great satisfaction and allowed staff to understand how their efforts truly had gone onto make a difference to others.



## ON TIDEWAY

The campaign set out to engage project staff at a time when engagement was low due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Many staff had been working from home for more than six months and had been coping with new and challenging working conditions, with parents juggling work and family and home schooling commitments. Wellbeing surveys had highlighted how these restrictions and the ongoing uncertainty had affected diet, sleep and stress levels.

The evidence is that the campaign had a beneficial effect on wellbeing and engagement levels. Surveys asked fundraisers and volunteers how their involvement made them feel, and the results showed 97% improved job satisfaction; 97% improved wellbeing; 91% had fun; 61% learnt new skills. With some events set around the river, 48% felt a connection to the river\*.

It also succeeded in bringing colleagues together for the first time in six months to volunteer or fundraise, raising morale by seeing a familiar face and exchanging lockdown experiences. The positive impact can be seen in these selected quotes from staff who took part:



*“I’m so pleased I managed it, I was a little daunted about half way through. My lovely husband paddled with me to ensure I didn’t chuck myself in when it got too hard! At the end I was rather pleased to have finished. It really is great fun especially on a beautiful river in the sunshine.”*

**Fiona Hoskins** after completing a 25k paddle board challenge that raised almost £1,800 for Trinity Homeless Projects and Drive Forward Foundation.



*“It was particularly welcome to have an opportunity to do some volunteering at a time when the office is generally closed, partly for the chance to see colleagues, but also generally for the opportunity to spend a little time doing something different. Thank you very much for organising. It’s much appreciated!”*

**Valmai Barclay**, who volunteered with her colleagues from the Legal Team who completed a foreshore survey and clean-up for Thames21.



*“The campaign improved my organisational skills as well as my networking and communication skills. It was amazing getting to know better some of my colleagues through the volunteering—people I have been working with for the past four years and never said a word to (except for “Good morning”!)—it was so much easier and fun to have a chat while collecting litter!”*

**Lilia Frunzo**, BMB campaign team member.

\*Based on 33 participant survey responses in September and October 2020

The campaign received praise from Tideway's leadership, who got involved in a number of events. CEO Andy Mitchell highlighted its positive effects in monthly 'all hands' briefings, saying: "It's fantastic to see so many of you coming together to do something good for the community."



*"Rather than accept that there was less we were able to do for our communities at the moment, the Corporate Responsibility team worked with teams across Tideway to create a concept which not only delivered major fundraising benefits for our charities but also engaged the Tideway team in a single endeavour, giving people a much-needed boost as we went into autumn."*

Lucy Webster, Tideway External Affairs Director

Make a  
**Difference**

**FUNDRAISING · VOLUNTEERING · DONATING**



**Tideway**

[www.tideway.london](http://www.tideway.london)