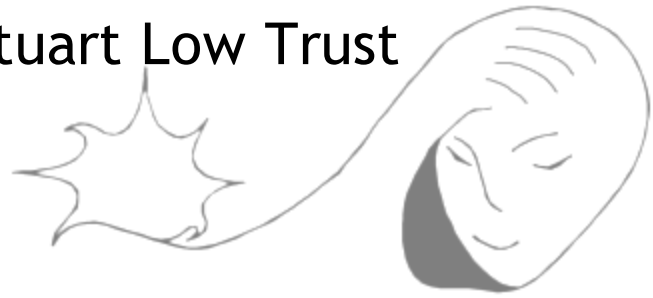




The Stuart Low Trust



bringing people together for better health and wellbeing

A Brief History of The Stuart Low Trust charity from foundation to 20th Anniversary 2023-24

The Stuart Low Trust charity is named in memory of Stuart Low, who tragically took his own life aged just 27 years old. Virginia Low, his mother, and other supporters wanted to create a radically different type of support in Islington, to fill a gap in service. They wanted to create a place, that was 'inclusive' for anyone isolated. They aimed to form a new project, where people could find the help they needed, before their isolation and mental health led to a serious crisis.

Through the kindness of a local vicar, who offered space at his Church hall on Friday evenings, the Friday evening events were launched. SLT expanded to offer occasional canal trips and holidays, which were very popular. There was even one trip to France.

Originally, Virginia's vision was to provide a service 24/7. However, this proved a bit too ambitious - although there were several experimental projects to develop out-of-hours support. In addition to being 'inclusive', offering out-of-hours support continues to be one of SLT's unique services in Islington.

The weekend service started with: Saturday Evening Dancing and a Sunday afternoon programme. These have evolved into our current programme of Saturday Wellbeing Workshops at the Mildmay Centre and our fantastic Philosophy Forum on Sunday afternoons at the Old Diorama Arts Centre.

Some exceptionally committed volunteers started and continued a gardening project at Culpepper Community Gardens for many years. Now, this has developed into our Nature programme of 24 visits each year, to a wide variety of interesting green spaces around London.

For many years, the Friday events were held every week at St Mary's Church Hall on Upper Street, with an office in the Claremont Centre near Angel tube. Many people talk with fondness of the 'buzzy and lively' feel of the St Mary's events.

Office 1, The Jean Stokes Community Centre, Carnoustie Drive,
Islington, London, N1 0XD
Tel: 020 7713 9304 Email: info@slt.org.uk Website: www.slt.org.uk
Company limited by guarantee registered in England No. 5001948
Charity Registered in England & Wales No. 1102325



Registered with



FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

MAYOR OF LONDON

And then the pandemic hit us all...Through the amazing efforts of the SLT leadership team of Hanna CEO and Rosie Operations & Communications Manager, the service continued with creative variations online for two years.

When we came back out of the pandemic in 2022 the decision was made to relocate our offices and the Friday events to the Jean Stokes Community Centre, newly refurbished by Islington Council. The team felt that this would offer much better facilities for our service and far more opportunities to collaborate with charities based here and the local community. From September 2022, SLT relocated its office and Friday events to the Jean Stokes Community Centre.

And so, SLT has grown from Friday evening events, run by dedicated volunteers, to offer up to 200 social activities per year, through 3 programmes Arts, Nature and Wellbeing, and supported by a team of staff alongside volunteers. SLT now reaches beyond Islington into neighbouring boroughs. SLT is described as a lifeline by many of our participants - and an expanding community of vital social support to hundreds of people who are isolated.

From our founder's unique vision for SLT and experimental projects led by volunteers, SLT has won several awards:

- A London Health Commission Award for promotion of mental wellbeing.
- Many 'Islington in Bloom Awards' for the Culpepper Garden project.
- And a highly prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service - This award was created in 2002 to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee and is signed by Her Majesty. It aims to shine a light on exceptional volunteer groups across the country.

Strategic Plan 2024-28 and refreshed mission and vision

In May 2024, The Stuart Low Trust Board approved a new Strategic Plan 2024-28, which aims to achieve what Virginia set out to create when she founded this charity, a safe welcoming and easily accessible place for young adults of Stuart Low's age find a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Our vision

To create an inclusive local community, where no one feels alone.

Our mission

We bring people together through a supportive community based in Islington to reduce isolation and enhance mental wellbeing.

Our values

- We remove labels.
- We challenge stigma.
- We are open to all.
- We are available out of hours.
- We are a community.

Our inclusive approach

We are an inclusive community:

- We connect with you as an individual.
- We welcome and value everyone.
- We offer safe, non-judgemental spaces.

Thank you to our funders

The Stuart Low Trust could never have developed over these past 20 years, without the financial support of Islington funders - enabling a small charity like SLT to thrive:

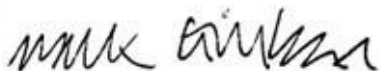
- Islington Council has given SLT a grant for at least 8 years.
- Cloudesley, a local charitable foundation, has funded SLT for at least 5 years.
- Cripplegate Foundation, a local funder, has been given regular grants. and its partner-funder Islington Giving.

These funders have provided the foundation for so many years for SLT to grow. We have been supported also by many grant-making organisations - to whom we are all extremely grateful. These are all listed in our annual report on our website.

Thank you to our volunteers

We could not run our activities without the kindness and generosity of our team of fabulous volunteers, who help us in so many ways and support over 100 of our activities every year. We offer our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the precious time you have given and continue to give to make The Stuart Low Trust such a wonderful organisation.

Mark Gillham



**Chief Executive
The Stuart Low Trust
October 2024**