



Katrina Barter

Inspired by a family member, the Australian-born Notting Hill resident aims to raise awareness of the various charities located within the Ladbroke Grove area. The Grove Trust, founded by Katrina Barter, Dani Hains and Julia Coupland, has raised £376,500 to date and is striving to assist charities in need. Katrina shares her thoughts on The Grove Trust, the charities involved and Notting Hill.

I founded the Grove Trust in 2010 with my colleagues, Dani Hains and Julia Coupland, from an idea I had from speaking to my husband's aunt who was a member of a charity in Los Angeles called the Everychild Foundation. I wanted to raise awareness of local charities around Ladbroke Grove because there is significant disparity of wealth in this neighbourhood and many people are not aware of charities in the local area. With recent cuts in government funding, charities are struggling to survive and many have been around for a long time. I felt there was an opportunity to try and build awareness amongst local residents, get them on board financially and as a group, allocate money to these local charities.

When I started my research, I discovered hundreds of charities. It was very difficult to determine where the focus should be so we decided to focus on one area of particular need each year. The first year we focused on youth education. We compiled an extensive list of charities to look at and spoke to experts in the field; there are a lot of people in the community who know these charities inside out. We visited a shortlist of eight charities, met with their directors, staff members and some of the beneficiaries. Four charities were then invited to present to the Grove Trust and its members. Each member voted on how to allocate the funds that had been committed. We raised a total of £110,000 our first year from member donations plus an offer to match the donations. We donated £50,000 to the Dalgarno Neighbourhood Trust to spend on youth programmes at a community centre located at the north end of St. Marks Road. Additional programmes were added to the already very successful youth programme in place. Vicky Laville-Davies runs the community centre which is open to all age groups, and she has really done a lot to make the centre a success.

The funds were donated for a two year period but many charities desperately need money for a longer period. We aim to help charities sustain programmes with proven success over financing a new project. We donated £25,000 to the Westside Independent School near Harrow Road. Westside has been very successful in helping children that have faced difficulties in mainstream educational facilities, providing an opportunity for education they



may not have otherwise had. Our donation went towards maintaining and improving their existing computer lab. In addition, £5,000 of the total donated funded a drama project with the help of the Gate Theatre. We really loved the opportunity to bring together different groups within the community and it was a great result. We also donated £25,000 to The Video College, a charity which has been running for 18 years and teaches people of all ages the art of filmmaking. Alongside these specialist skills, students also have the opportunity to develop core skills that can help in further education, work and training.

What are some of your upcoming projects?

To date we have raised £376,500 and have donated a total of £343,000 to the following local charities: Dalgarno Neighbourhood Trust, The Video College, Westside Independent School, The Partnership for Supplementary Schools, Age Concern, Open Age, Al-Hasaniya, the SOS Project and the Kensington and Chelsea Foundation. After the first year focus on youth education, we then focused issues facing the elderly and this year we are focused on youth unemployment. This year, charities presenting to our patrons this November are the Rugby Portobello Trust, Clement James and the Harrow Club W10.

Our largest grants have been awarded to the SOS Project, the Dalgarno Neighbourhood Trust, Open Age and Age Concern. The SOS Project aims to break the cycle of reoffending and our donation funded a local case worker for one year. The donation to Dalgarno funded their youth project and a homework club at the community centre. Open Age used our donation to help projects to assist the elderly to stay active and Age Concern used the donation to fund their intergenerational project. All of these donations are for a two year period.

Every pound raised is donated to local charities as our time is voluntary. Our patrons are private individuals in the neighbourhood who commit to donating £5,000 annually. We also accept individual donations.



Tell us more about you and your favourite places in Notting Hill?

I love brunch at Granger's, being Australian how can I not! I enjoy a relaxed meal at the Ladbroke Arms, dinner at Assaggi and E&O and a glass of wine at Negozio Classica. I love going to the flower shop on the corner of Portobello Road and Blenheim Crescent. The Grocer on Elgin has always been a saviour and Tavola on Westbourne Grove is fantastic! I also really enjoy shopping in Assya, Temperley, Zadig & Voltaire, Sandro and Melissa Odabash.

How would you define the style of Notting Hill?

Eclectic. I don't think you can put one statement to that. That's why I love it and that's why I think a lot of people are drawn to it because it's extremely eclectic. It's very diverse. No matter what mood you are in you can literally put that hat on and then go and find it. It creates diversity.

What is your style inspiration?

Just walking around in the streets. Notting Hill is full of incredibly stylish men and women. It's always good fun to people watch. When you see so many people putting together high street fashion with something vintage and something designer, they all seem to pull it off.

Which is your favourite piece in your wardrobe?

A leather coat that is really soft and lined with cashmere. It's so cosy and warm.