



# London VCSE Sector Dashboard Launch July 2025

Explore, map and share our Voluntary, Community  
and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector

**LONDON**  
**DATA WEEK**



# What does Superhighways do?

**Superhighways helps charities and community groups gain essential digital and data skills backed by the right tech to achieve their goals.**

[www.superhighways.org.uk](http://www.superhighways.org.uk)

Part of Kingston Voluntary Action



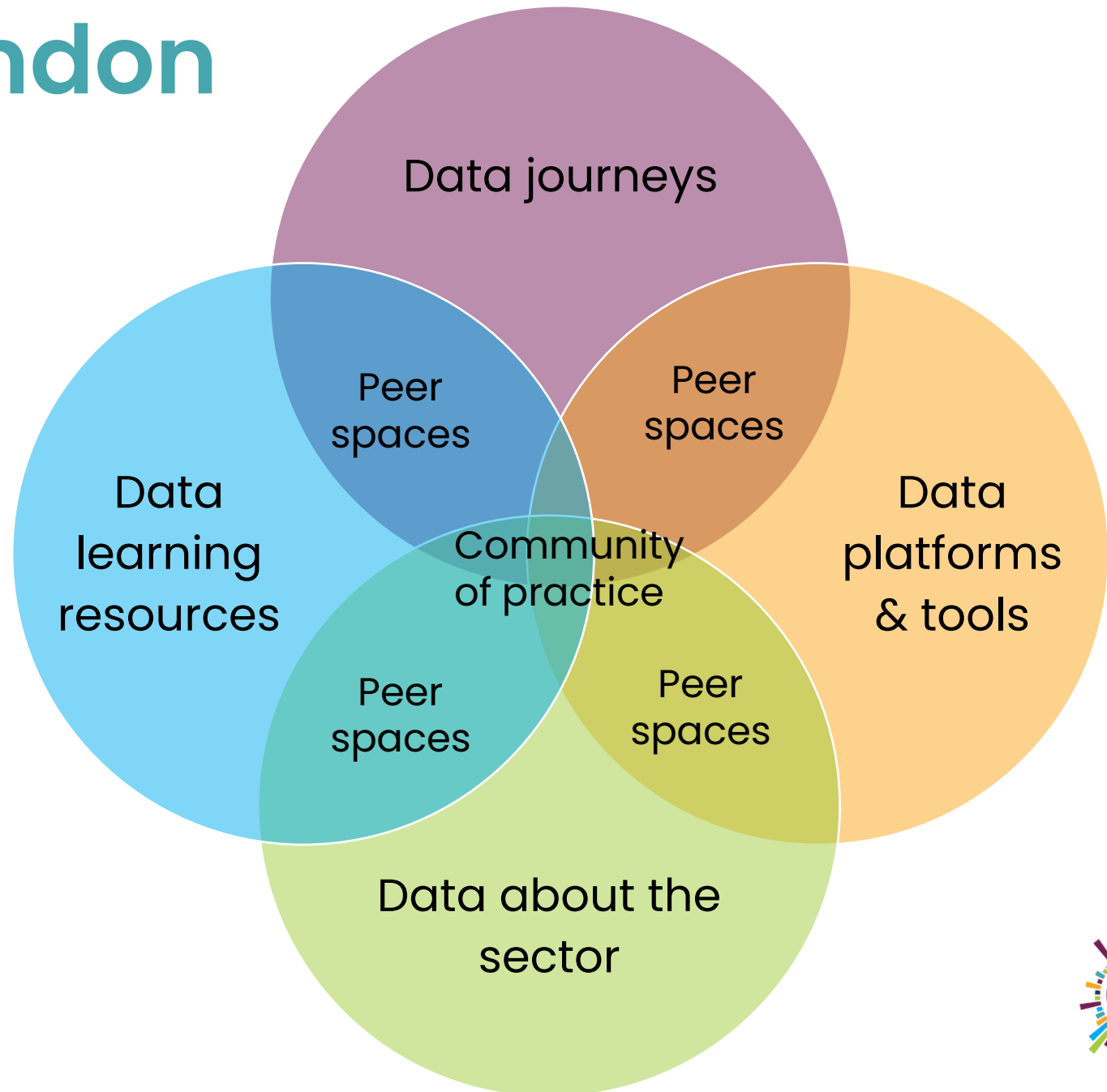
# Datawise London

The **Cornerstone Fund** is a collaboratively funded **systemic change** initiative designed to support a thriving civil society in London.

**City Bridge Foundation** funded us to lead a partnership programme, [Datawise London](#), where we set out to identify key challenges to better use of data by the sector and experiment with developing collective solutions.



CITY BRIDGE  
FOUNDATION



# Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector

A broad umbrella that covers organisations driven by social or environmental purpose rather than profit. It includes:

- ✓ **Charities:** Organisations registered with the Charity Commission who operate for the public benefit and have exclusively charitable purposes such as relieving poverty, promoting health etc.
- ✓ **Social enterprises:** Community Interest Companies (CICs) operate for community benefit and reinvest profits into social good. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) promote participation in sport and are open to everyone.
- ✓ **Community organisations:** Unincorporated grassroots groups rooted in a specific place or community, usually addressing local needs like youth services, housing advice, or cultural events.

And other structures and sub sectors e.g. Mutuals and Faith organisations



# The problem



Data about the VCSE sector in London isn't easily accessible in one place.

- ✓ Data is scattered across siloed, open or private directories and databases
- ✓ Large public data sets can be overwhelming in the complexity and volume of data
- ✓ Publicly available data often requires data skills to navigate, identify and utilise data
- ✓ Complex open datasets often miss 'below the radar' organisations
- ✓ Lack of data standards and external publication
- ✓ Duplication of data and effort across multiple locations



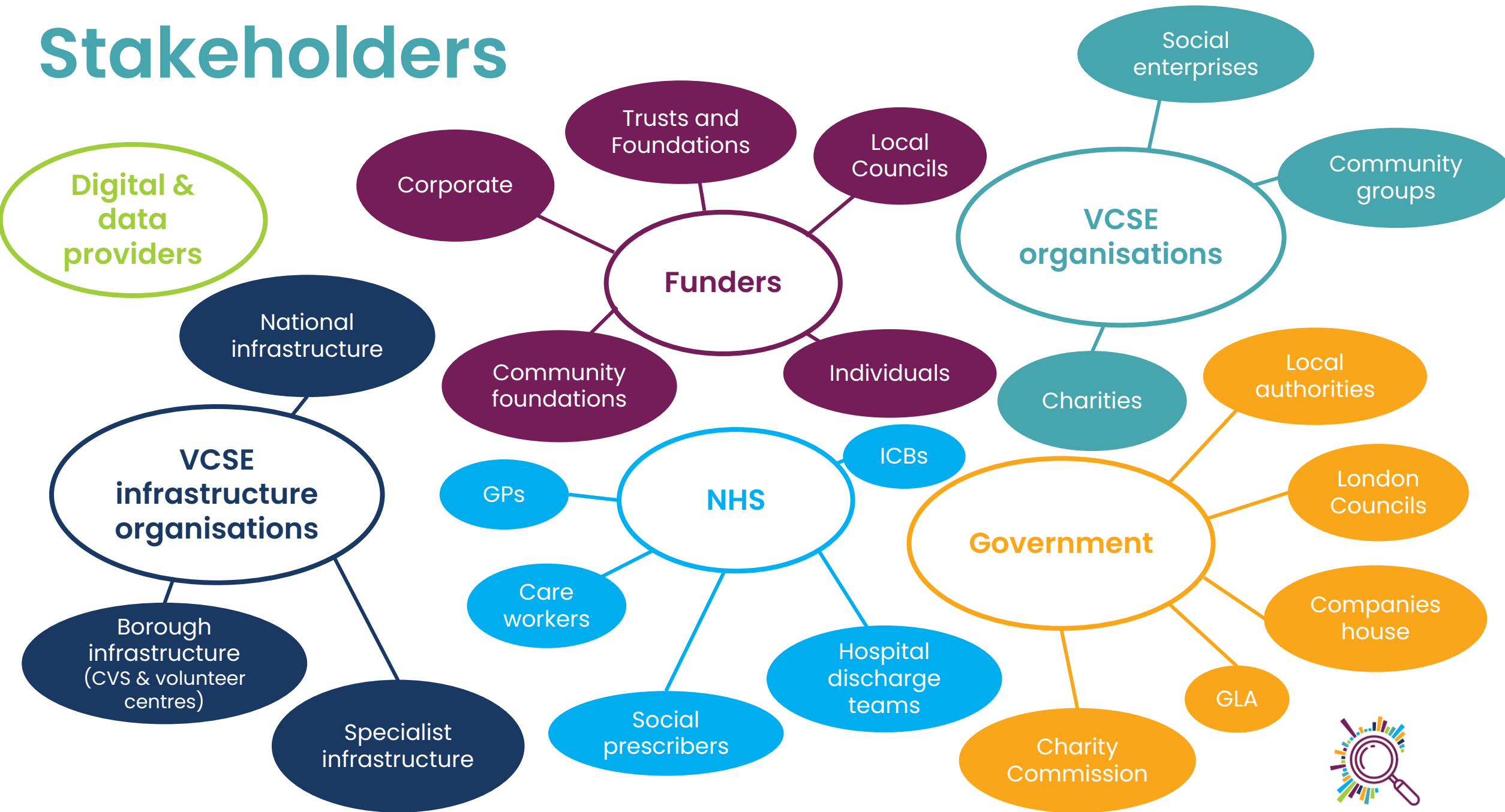
# It's very hard to answer questions like...

- ✓ How many organisations operate in London?
- ✓ What do they do?
- ✓ Where are they based?
- ✓ Who do they help?
- ✓ How can I contact them?
- ✓ How are they funded?
- ✓ How many people work or volunteer for them?

- ✓ Where are the gaps?
- ✓ How can we support them?
- ✓ How can we collaborate with them?



# Stakeholders



# Example use case

## National Health Service (NHS)

Collaborates with the VCSE sector to co-design health strategies, deliver services, advocate for patients, and promote health and wellbeing.

## Needs collated, consistent, reliable data to...

- ✓ Understand VCSE provision for signposting and referrals
- ✓ Spot gaps in provision by VCSE sector organisations
- ✓ Increase reach into communities for targeted campaigns
- ✓ Identify organisations to help with co-design of services





# Other possible use cases

Type of stakeholder	Role in the VCSE sector	Need collated, consistent, reliable data to...	Example use case
Funders	Provide financial resources, support and strategic partnerships to help these organisations achieve their goals, deliver services and address social issues effectively	Identify trends and gaps in provision to inform their funding decisions and foster collaboration	Funders in a specific area can identify existing provision – who's working in the same areas, how big are they, where are they getting funding from – before funding new services
Local Government	Provide & develop services, signpost and refer to complementary VCSE services, fund VCSE organisations, projects and services	Develop and improve public services, promote collaboration, inform commissioning, decide on resource allocation, increase resilience and response in emergencies and inform policy making	Local authorities can find out what's going on in their area to signpost and refer people
VCSE Infrastructure organisations	Supports and develops VCSE organisations and groups through training, resources, networking, funding advice, volunteer management and advocacy	Provide support services which reflect the needs of the VCSE groups they support	Identify the number of employees, volunteers and trustees in their area so that they can provide sufficient training opportunities
Charities & social enterprises delivering services in London	Address societal issues by providing support, services and resources to those in need, while advocating for positive change and fostering community development	Foster collaboration, avoid resource duplication and create a more effective support network for the community	Identify other people providing complementary services so they can signpost to them
Digital & data providers	Provide tools to help VCSE organisations to manage their own data and explore public data	Understand the sector & provide tools which meet the sector's need	Identify organisations which might need help with managing their data
Developers and housing associations	Build and maintain housing	Understand the communities where they want to build or manage properties	Identify local groups to consult on new projects

We have used our state of the sector collaboration to advocate for funding the sector properly and it has even led directly to us receiving additional funding itself, attached to a small grants pot for voluntary and community groups in some of the 'cold spots' that the work identified.

# The idea



Superhighways,  
leading the  
Datawise London  
programme,  
decided to explore if  
we could...

- ✓ Create a tool to unify data in a **customisable, interactive, accessible and sustainable** way?
- ✓ **Foster collaboration** among infrastructure organisations, local government, health bodies and funders?
- ✓ Work with the sector to **standardise data categorisation, collection and use?**



# What would good look like?

A **community owned and led** data platform which brings together existing public data sets with VCSE owned data in an **accessible and sustainable format** so that different stakeholders can **access, explore and visualise** London's VCSE sector



**This will be an amazing tool for our grants officers to identify organisations that are not known to us, so that we can reach out and let them know about our scheme.**

# What we're NOT trying to do!

Create a list of services available in boroughs – our exploration of service directories is that they are at their best when updated by the people running the services themselves and run by local teams with their fingers on the pulse.

**Instead** we hope to signpost to those directories and collaborate with their creators.



# Our process so far

## Round 1 development

- ✓ Identified all the stakeholders and possible use cases
- ✓ Talked with people in all stakeholder groups
- ✓ Developed a basic prototype – Charity Commission data only
- ✓ Ran a series of co-design sessions

## Round 2 development

- ✓ Included Companies House and 360 Giving data
- ✓ Increased functionality from co-design session feedback
- ✓ Ran more co-design sessions to iterate further



# Disclaimers!

- ✓ The data from all the data sources we used is only as good as the data people provide or upload
- ✓ Companies House publish much less information than the Charity Commission
- ✓ 360 Giving data has been used to validate grants where we can match the data to organisations we have in our data set.
- ✓ Smaller, unincorporated charities are not (yet!) included





# A guided tour through the VCSE Dashboard



# Now it's your turn!

Explore on your own or test out one of these use cases...

1. Local  
infrastructure

2. Local  
government

3. Frontline  
organisation

4. Funder

5. NHS



# 1. Local infrastructure use case and step-by-step guide

## The use case – a state of the sector report to inform support offered to local organisations

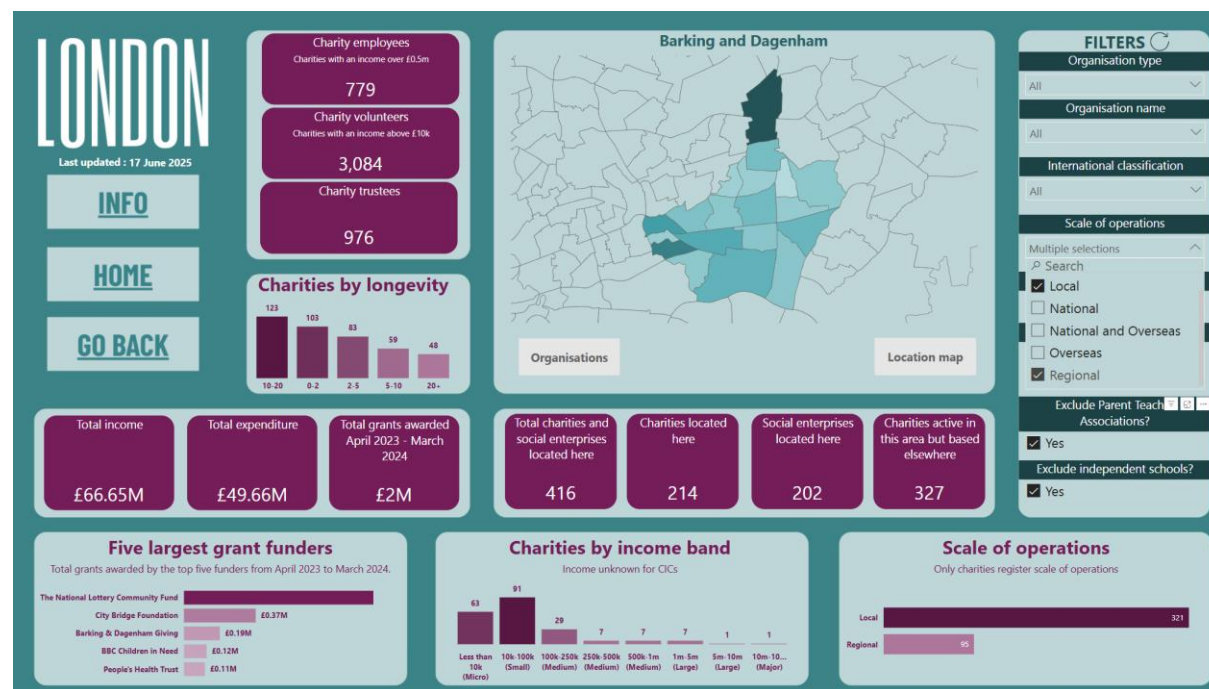
A Local Infrastructure organisation wants to produce a state of the sector report showing how many VCSE organisations are based in their borough including:

- ✓ Numbers of staff, volunteers & employees
- ✓ Income & expenditure
- ✓ Grant funding
- ✓ Organisations delivering services in, but not based in, the borough

They want to exclude charities working nationally or overseas as well as Independent schools & Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) as consider not really contributing to local VCSE service provision.

## Steps to follow

1. On the home page select **Boroughs**
2. On the map, click on a borough to select it
3. Click on the **Drill through** button
4. In the exclusion filters, tick exclude **Parent Teacher Associations** & exclude **Independent schools**
5. Under the Scale of Operation filter, select **Local** (operating in one or two boroughs) and **Regional** (operating in multiple boroughs or across London)



## 2. Local government use case and step-by-step guide

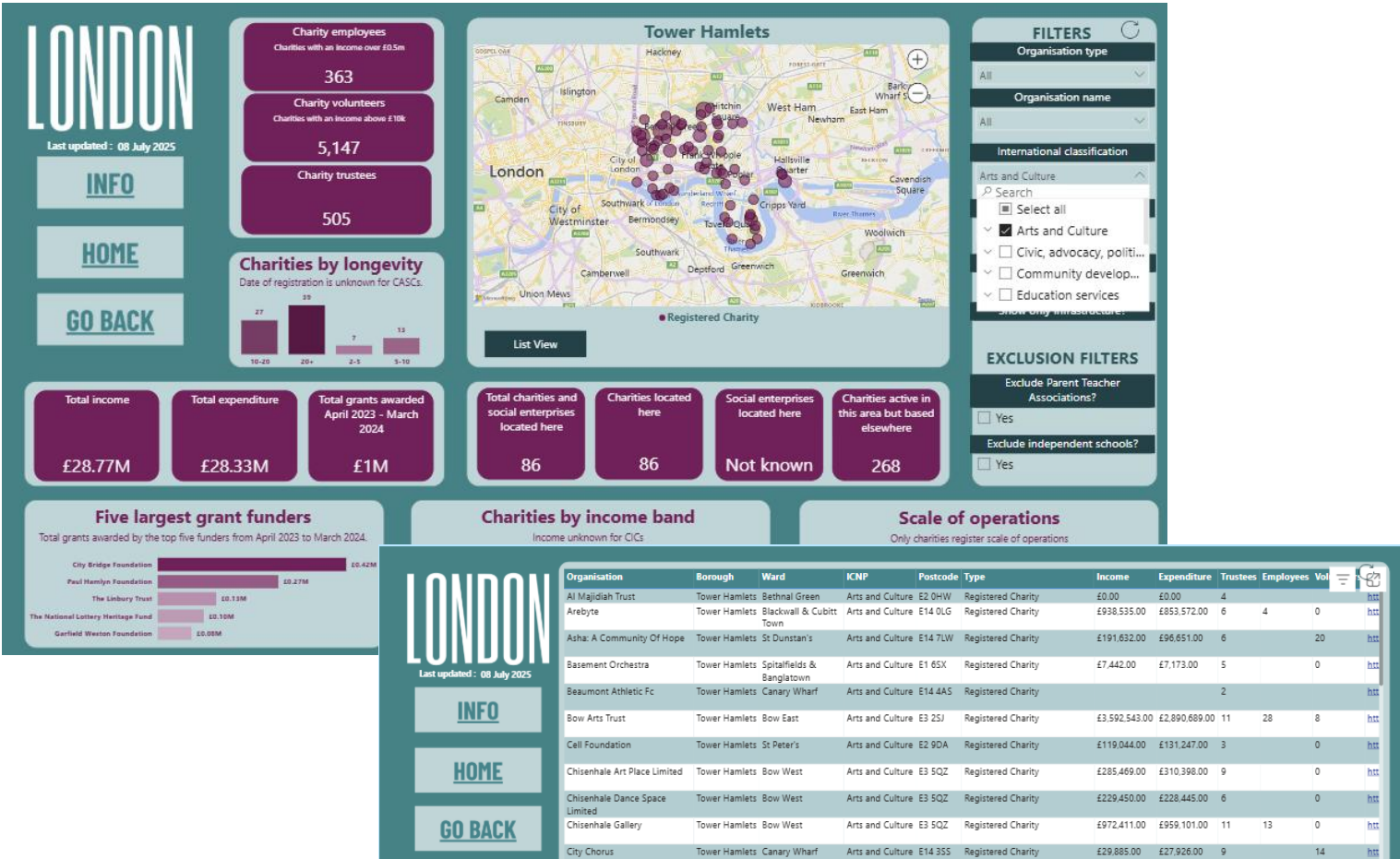
### The use case – identify VCSE organisations whose services could complement statutory provision

A Local Council team providing services in the borough wants to place on a map all Arts & Culture organisations locally so they can collaborate and signpost people to relevant activities. Although they already have a good idea of who is operating in their own borough, they are keen to find additional organisations in surrounding boroughs too.

The International Classification Not for Profit (ICNP) can be used for this. Charities select one of them when registering with the charity commission.

### Steps to follow

1. On the home page select **a borough**
2. On the map, click on a borough to select it
3. Click on the **Location map** button
4. In the filters, under **International Classification**, select **Arts & Culture**
5. In the filters, under **Scale of Operations**, select **Local & Regional** to exclude organisations working nationally or overseas.
6. Click on the **List View** button to see a list of the organisations



# 3. Frontline organisation use case and step-by-step guide

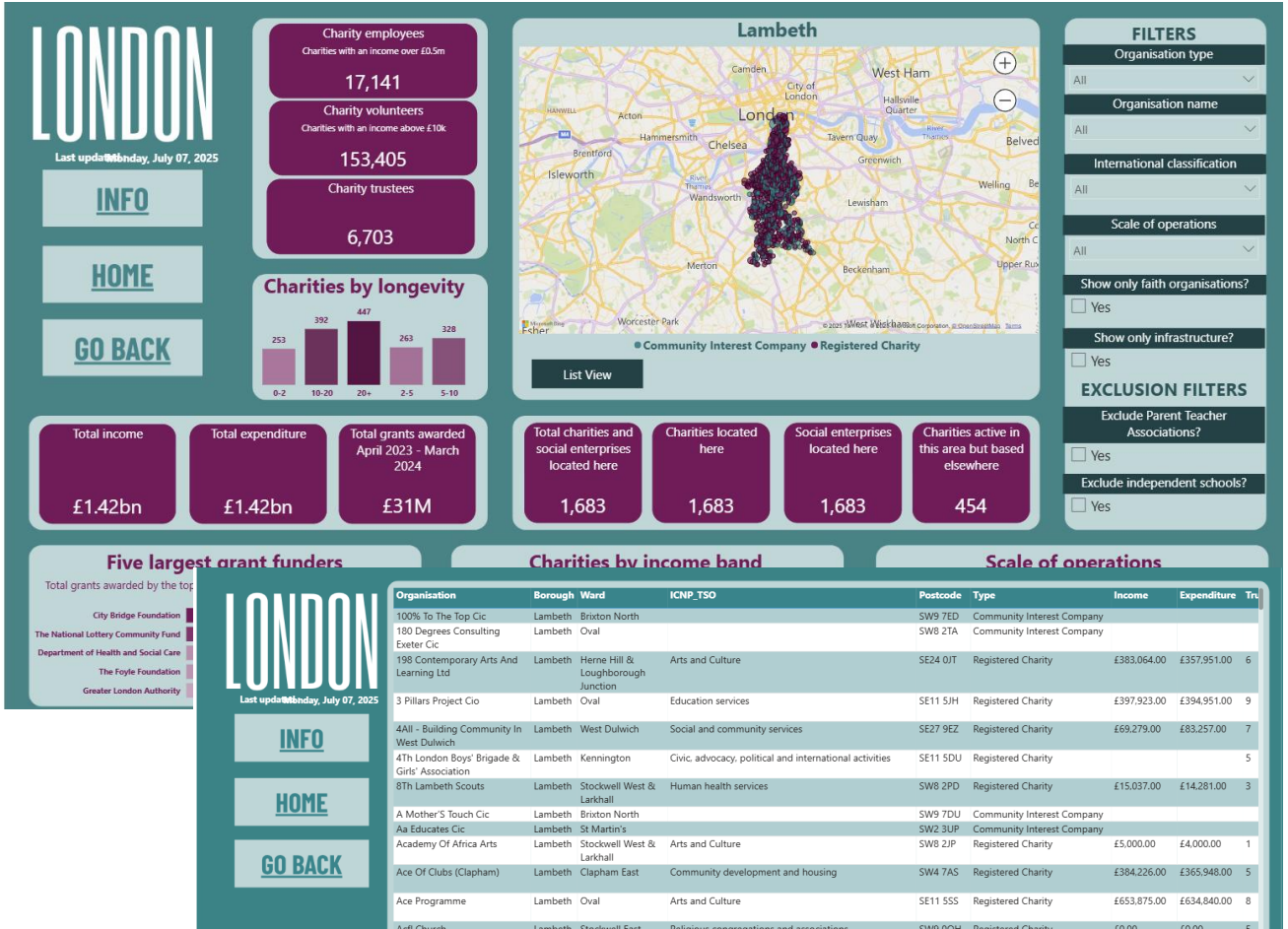
## The use case – find local faith organisations to identify a potential referral network

A new Foodbank and Surplus hub wants to get the word out about their services and have identified that faith organisations are closely connected with a broad range of communities you'd like to reach. They want to produce a list so that they can contact them.

The Faith filter can be used for this (find an explanation of how we identified faith groups in the Info section).

### Steps to follow

1. On the home page select **Boroughs**
2. On the map, click on a borough to select it
3. In the filters, select **Show only faith organisations**
4. Click on the **Location** button to go to a map view
5. Click on **List view** to see a list of the organisations





# 4. Funder use case and step-by-step guide

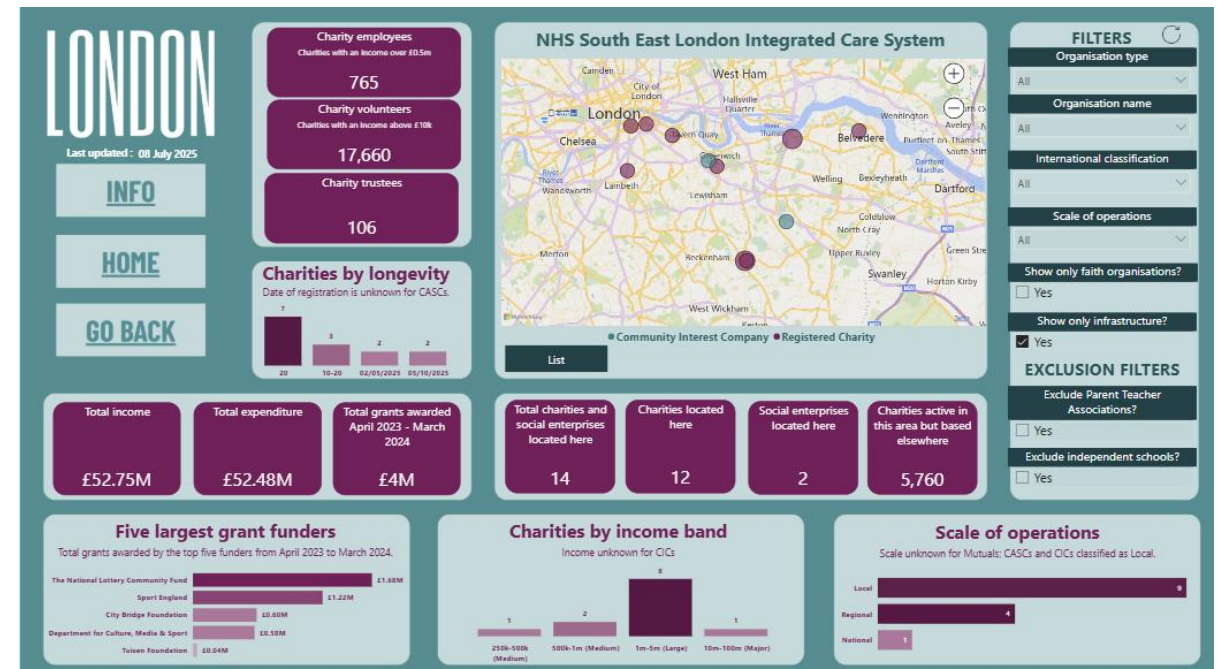
## The use case – understanding existing local provision and ensuring we're not missing funding anyone

A funder wants to fund a specialist infrastructure organisation in a specific London borough. Before going ahead, they want to ensure that where there may be existing organisations offering similar services, including generic infrastructure support either in the same borough or a neighbouring one, duplication is minimised but collaboration to add value is encouraged.

Selecting a ICS region enables you to see the bigger picture around a London borough. The 'Show infrastructure only' filter can be used to identify organisations providing infrastructure support to the sector.

### Steps to follow

1. On the home page select an **ICS**
2. On the map, click on an ICS to select it
3. Click on the **Location map** button to view organisations operating in the ICS area on a map
4. Select the filter **Show infrastructure organisations only** to narrow down results.



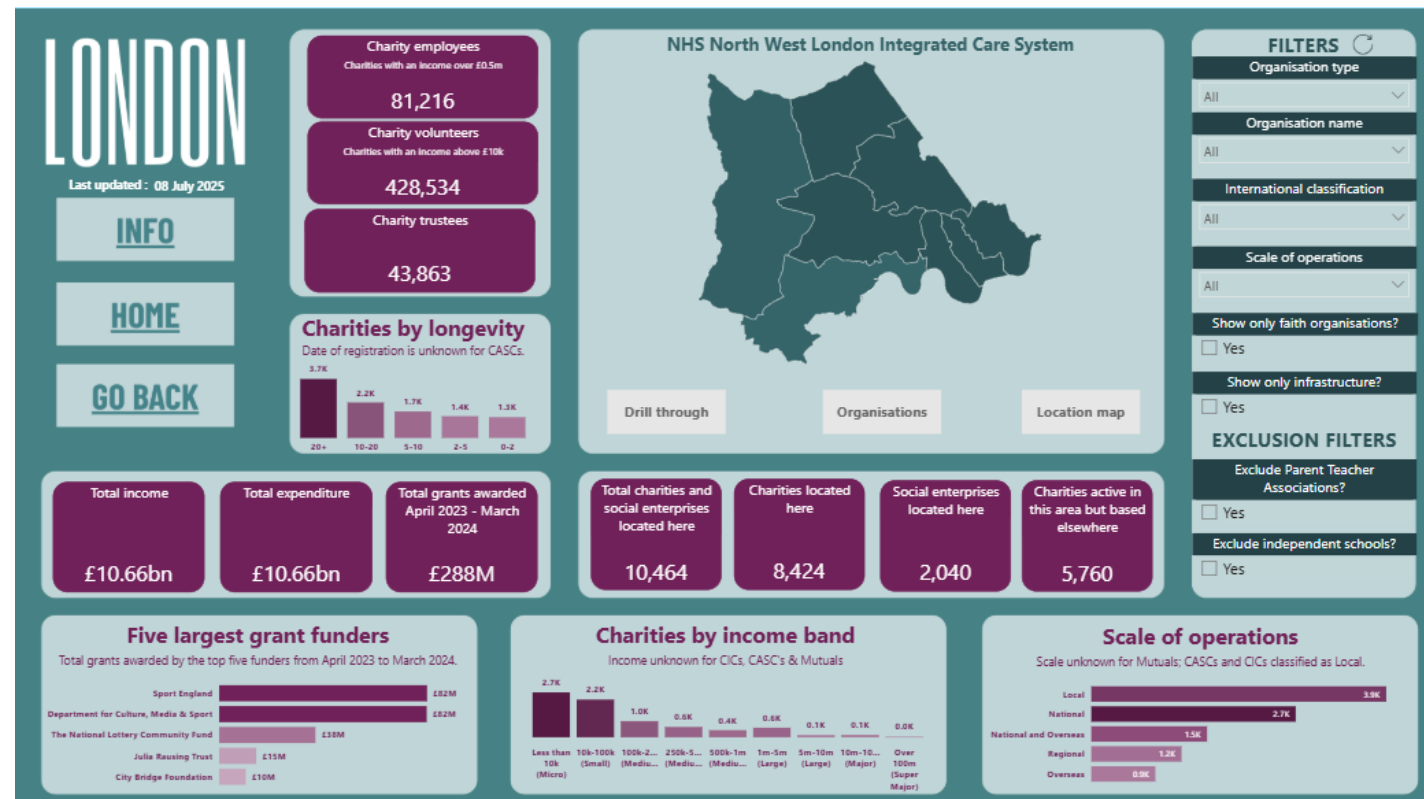
# 5. NHS use case & step by step guide

## The use case – understanding existing local provision of the VCSE sector in an Integrated Care System (ICS)

A NHS VCSE ICS Alliance wants to better understand the VCSE sector in their ICS to better understand complementary service provision for social prescribing and referrals.

### Steps to follow

1. On the home page select **ICS**
2. On the map, click on a ICS to select it
3. Click on the **Drill down** button to see the ICS in more detail
4. To view a borough in more detail, select it and click one of the buttons



# What did you think? Poll time!

- ✓ Will you use the dashboard to inform your work?
- ✓ Can you share a use case where you might use it?





# Next steps



# Our plan

## Stage 1: harnessing open data

### The goal:

To build a co-designed tool which brings together open datasets to create an interactive, accessible dashboard.

## Stage 2: bringing together community data

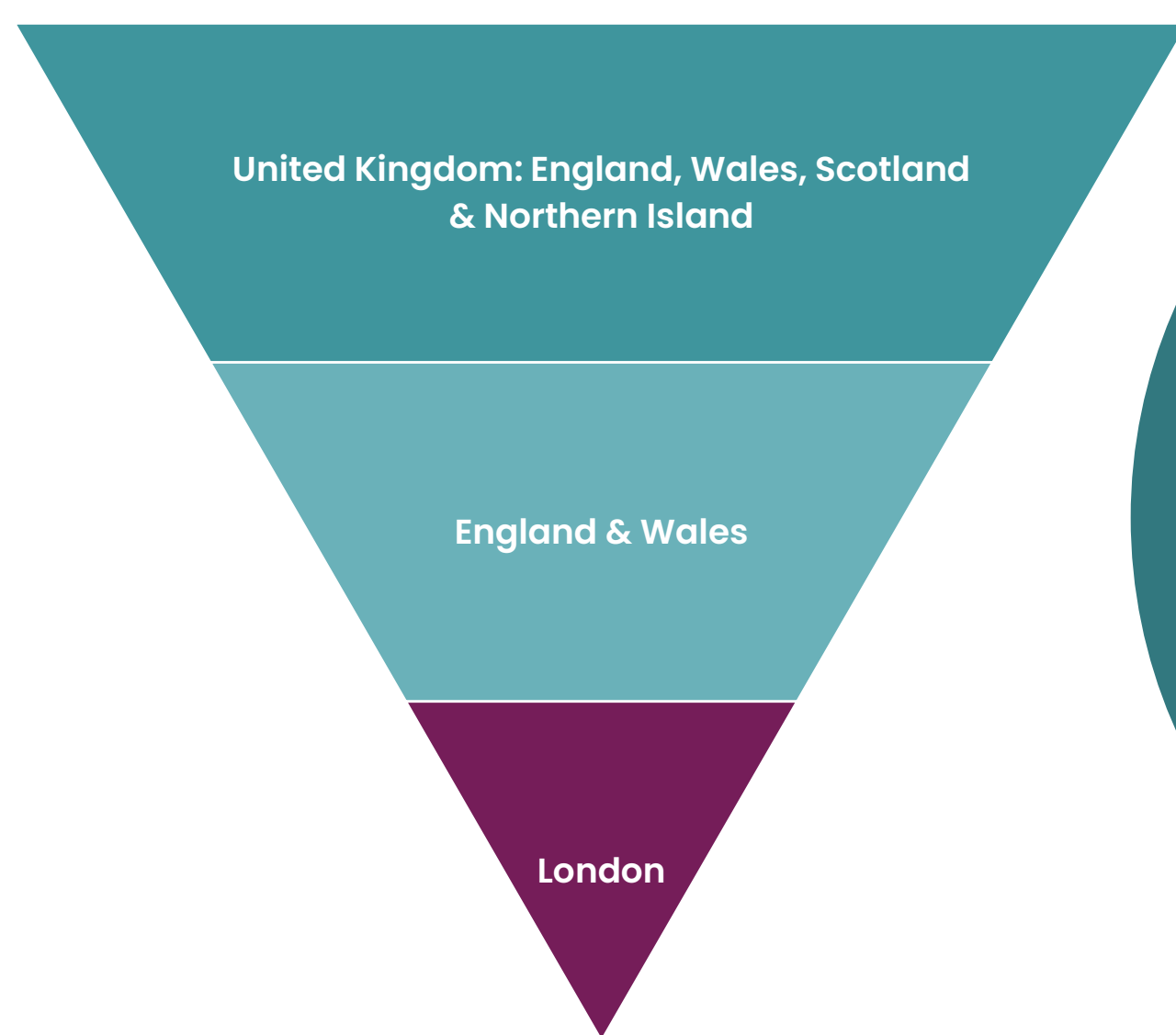
### The goal:

To unite VCSE orgs in developing shared data standards and integrating their data with open datasets for a fuller picture.



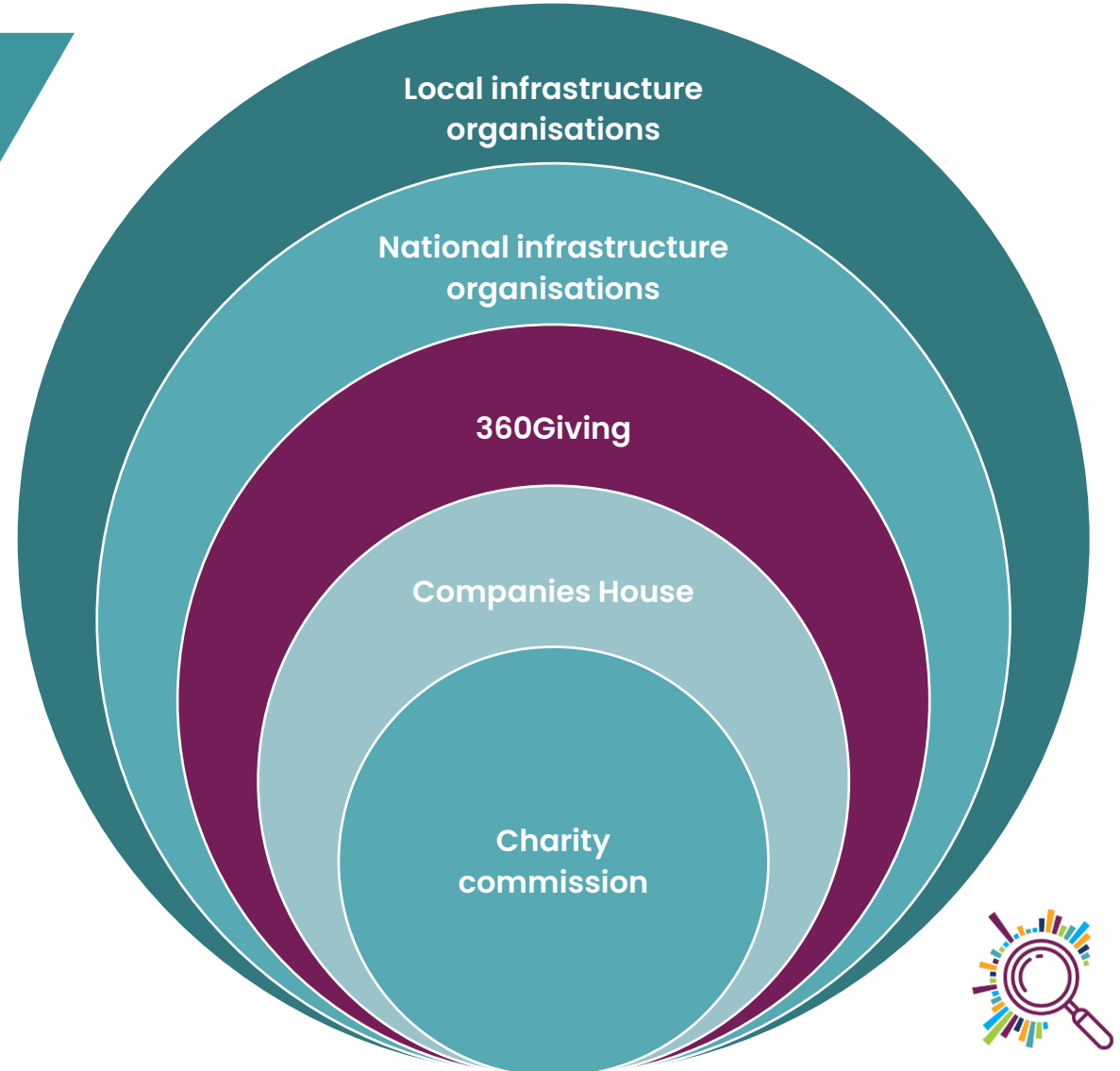
# Breadth

Increasing scope to include the whole of the UK



# Depth

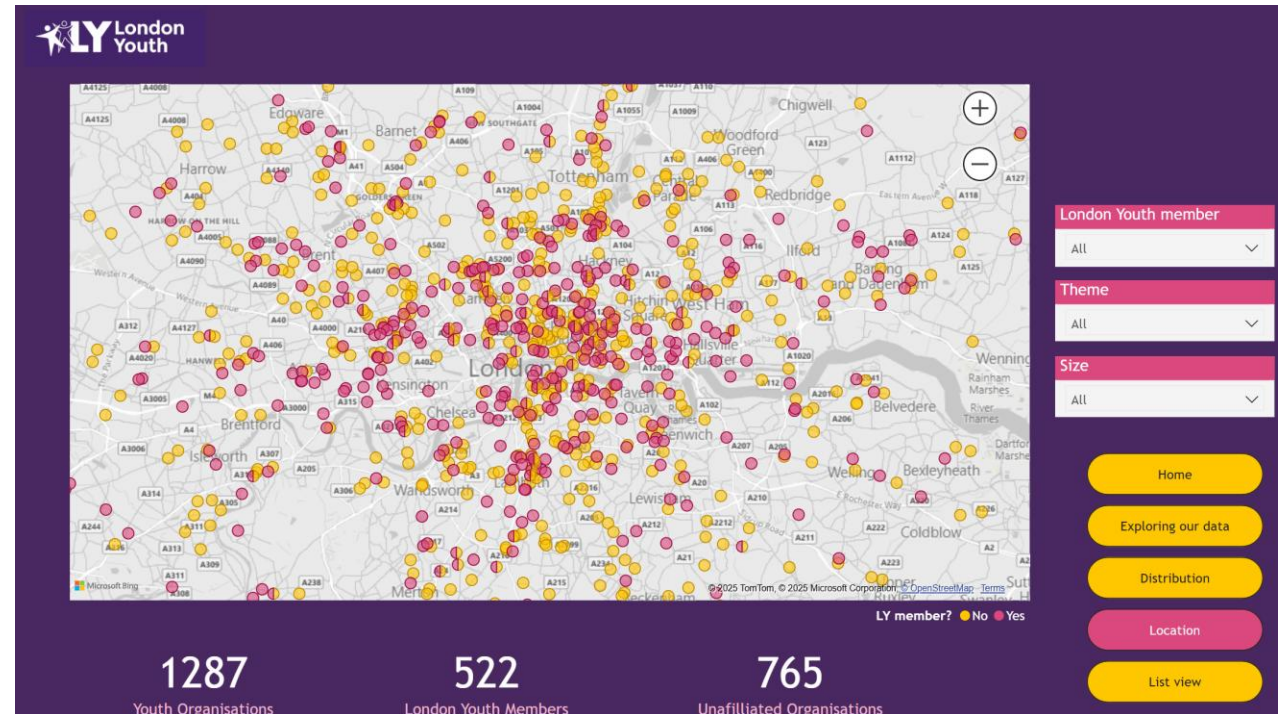
Bringing community data together with open data



# Smaller scale experimentation

In partnership with London Youth

- ✓ **Data pooled** from London Youth, Charity Commission, Companies House and 360Giving
- ✓ **Engaged sector stakeholders** through feedback sessions to encourage data sharing
- ✓ **Additional data shared by** Young Foundations, Jack Petchey Foundation and Partnership for Young London – due to be published publicly soon.



# Other related initiatives

- ✓ We're not alone – there are other conversations being had and complementary initiatives we're linking with. These include:
  - ✓ NAVCA – State of the Sector standardisation project
  - ✓ Data Collective's Place Based Data Spoke (DataKind UK)
  - ✓ Nottingham Trent University's VCSE Data Observatory
  - ✓ MyCake – GLA/loUH Civic Strength Index innovation fund project
  - ✓ NCVO Almanac (and UK Charity classification project)
  - ✓ Local Trust: Below the radar research



# Get involved



Help us ensure this is a collaborative community tool, co-designed by the people who use it.

## It's poll time again...

- ✓ Would you be interested in collaborating with us?
  - ✓ Sharing your data
  - ✓ Joining co-design sessions
  - ✓ Being part of a collaborative responsible for guiding the dashboard's continuous improvement
  - ✓ Contributing technically to its design & build
  - ✓ Funding the project
  - ✓ Joining forces and linking your work to ours
  - ✓ Embedding the dashboard on your website
- ✓ Would you like to be kept informed about new developments to the dashboard?





# Thank you for coming!

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