



## STRATEGY



## GLL working with the Royal Borough of Greenwich

### Modernising public services through cooperative partnerships

GLL's worker-owned cooperative and charitable social enterprise works with several cooperative councils across the UK—including Cardiff Council, Royal Borough of Greenwich, Hackney Council, Manchester City Council, Newham Council, and Preston City Council—to deliver affordable and accessible public services, including leisure, libraries, children's centres, and cultural facilities.

Constantly looking to scale up with innovative partnerships, we're talking to several cooperative councils in 2025 to explore new ideas.

We started life in Greenwich in 1993, providing a new cooperative solution to "under-threat" public services. A meeting of determined minds and cooperative ambition between Greenwich Councillors, Officers, and our staff identified a cooperative that would boost local community outcomes, meet service needs, and, importantly, at the time, deliver cost savings. The number of leisure centres and services has increased since formation.

We share Greenwich's - and other cooperative councils' - commitment to building a fairer society and a sustainable social economy. We also recognise the impact and scalability of our partnerships in achieving significant economic and social gains that address this Government's key focus areas. At our heart is a commitment to local communities and our 11,000-strong workforce, both of which benefit from significant reinvestment of our operating surpluses.

We are a robust business of over 30 years and have weathered several economic headwinds - leveraging our entrepreneurial expertise, local focus and people power.

Our cooperative has the power to innovate and modernise public services. In partnership with councils, we operate some of the country's best-used leisure centres and libraries, with over 58 million customer visits each year. Woolwich Library is London's busiest.



GLL Literary Foundation Launch at Battersea Library

After 15 years of operating the largest independent support scheme for young athletes in the UK, this year we launched our GLL Literary Foundation. We are working with Council partners and Literary Publishers to support authors of children's literature across our 115 libraries. Talented young authors will benefit from financial support, bespoke mentoring, business advice, and marketing support. This will ensure they have the best chance of getting their writing in front of leading publishers while forging strong relationships with young readers in libraries.

Cooperatives are an important part of Civil Society Organisations. GLL is proud to lend our weight to shaping the Government's emerging Civil Society Covenant and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), noting the fundamental importance that commissioning and procurement hold for social businesses and cooperatives to engage fully with public services.

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