



DALSTON
LIBRARY OF THINGS

Hackney

Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission - 18 March

Ander Zabala - Sustainability and Climate Service Group Manager

➤ Borrowing to reduce consumption

The original purpose of setting a Library of Things was to enable a circular economy to:

- Reduce consumption based emissions
- Reduce waste
- Access high quality items to residents
- Free up space at home
- Save money from not buying new
- Increase visitors to libraries
- Normalise lending



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> Meeting Our Ambitions

Strategic Objectives



Strategic Plan Priority:
Greener & Healthier,
Fairer and Safer

Sust & Climate Service
Plan Promises to be
inclusive, greener and
innovative

Climate Action Plan



Reduce emissions by
increasing participation
to behaviour change
services and reduce
waste



Increase repair and
reuse of goods

Manifesto Commitments



Circular Economy
Strategy and Action Plan
delivery. For short,
medium and long term
outcomes to increase
circularity in the borough

One World Living Climate Programme

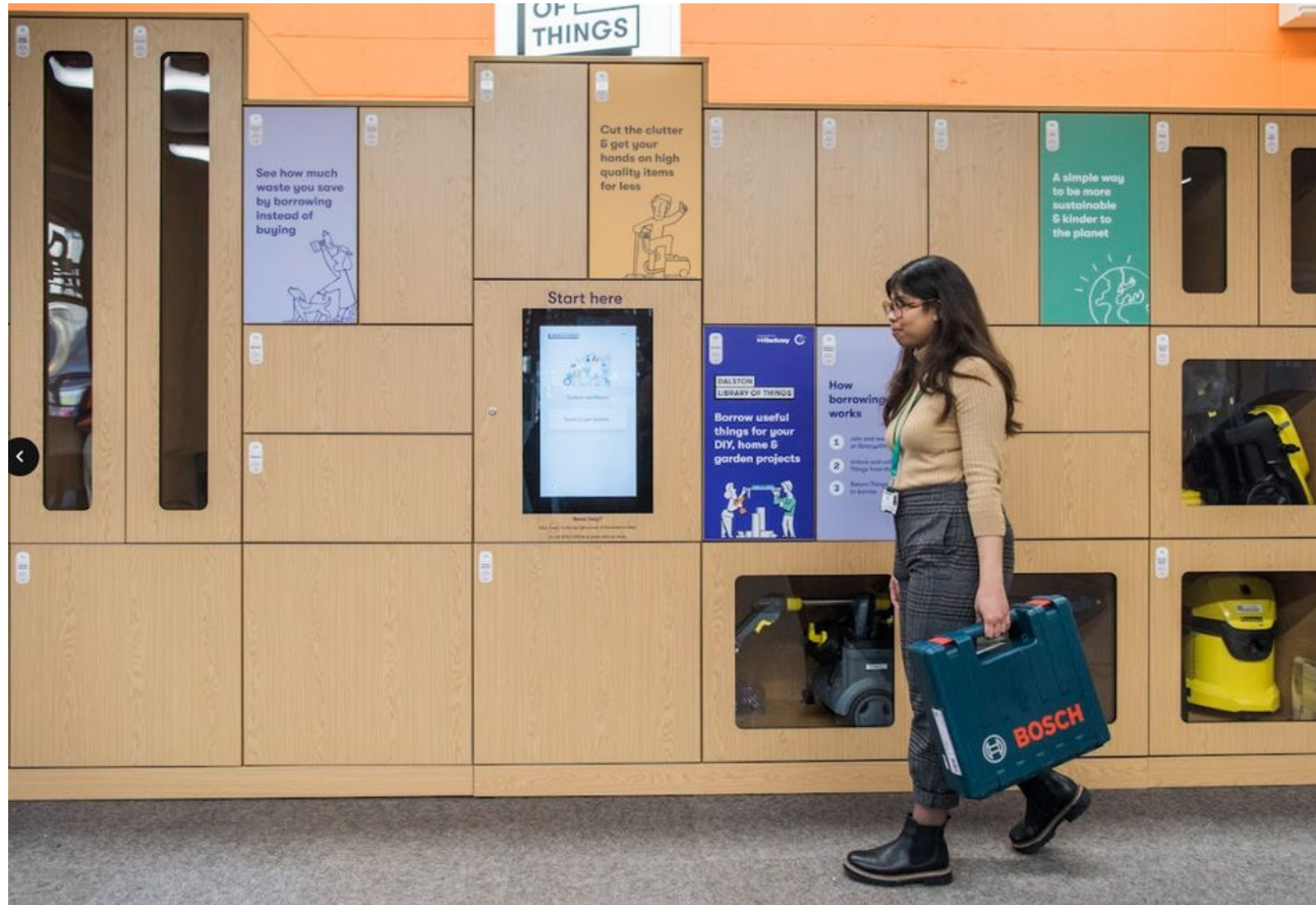


Consumption based emissions
steering group

Common ambition for all
boroughs to reduce emissions
from food (Hackney is the lead),
plastics, electronic & textiles
emissions



➤ The Partnership



Note: This is only for Dalston site, the Hackney Wick site is not funded by the Council

- In 2021 - a one off set up cost of £30k to set up (includes £5k grant from ReLondon)
- 'Library of Things' responsible for sourcing new items (not 2nd hand), lockers, software, users troubleshooting, reporting, overall operations & maintenance, as well as communications
- Council responsible for access to site, promotion and covering a maximum of £3,500 a year if minimum level of borrowing is not met. Dalston meets it.
- Contract to July 2025

> The Partnership



Opened in Dec 2021

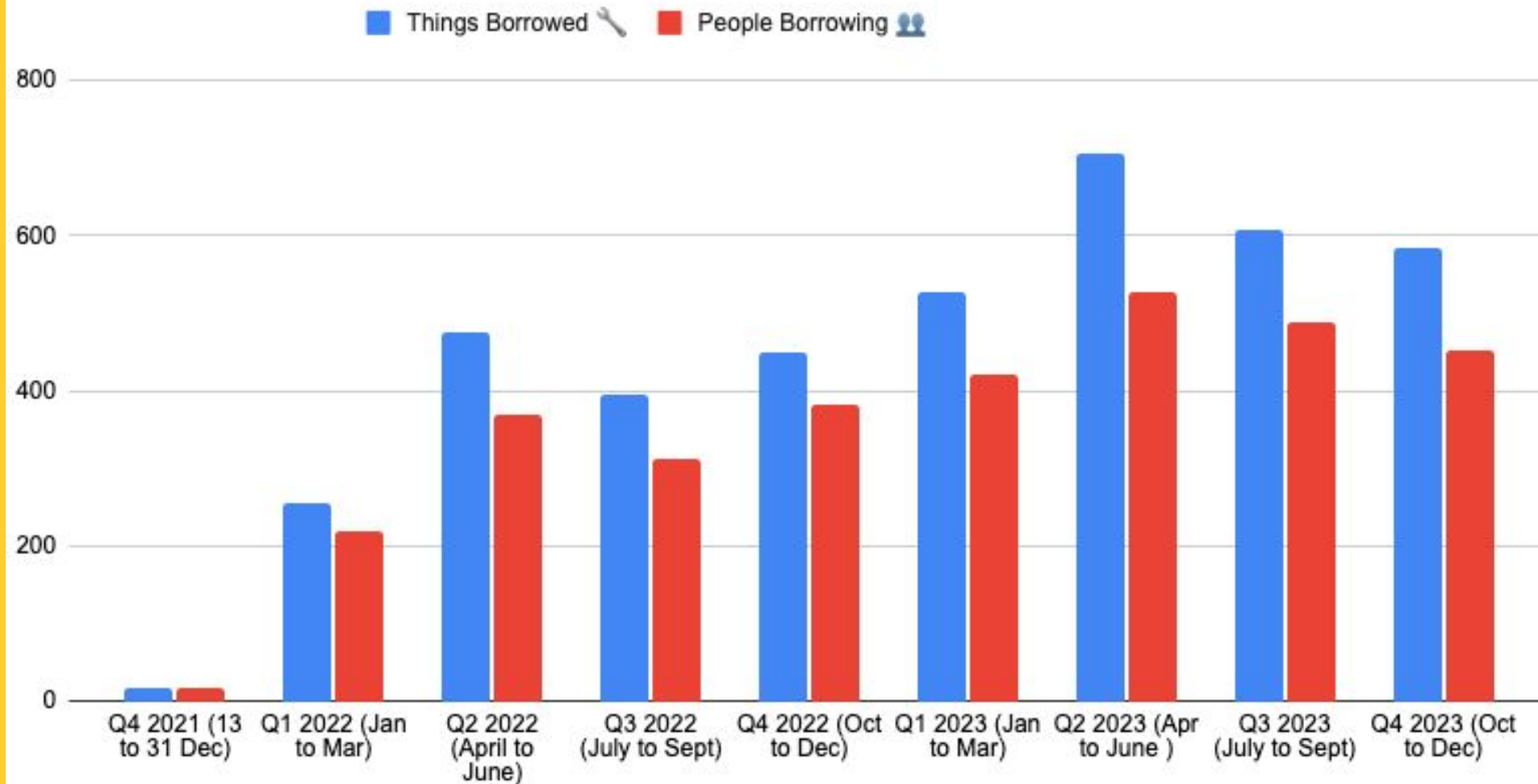
- Access 49 items via self service – Monday to Sunday
- 5% of retail price
- 25% discount rates (pensioners, gov support, students etc)
- Pandemic delayed opening by 18 months
- Expanded to 17 more sites across London and 1 pilot in Brighton

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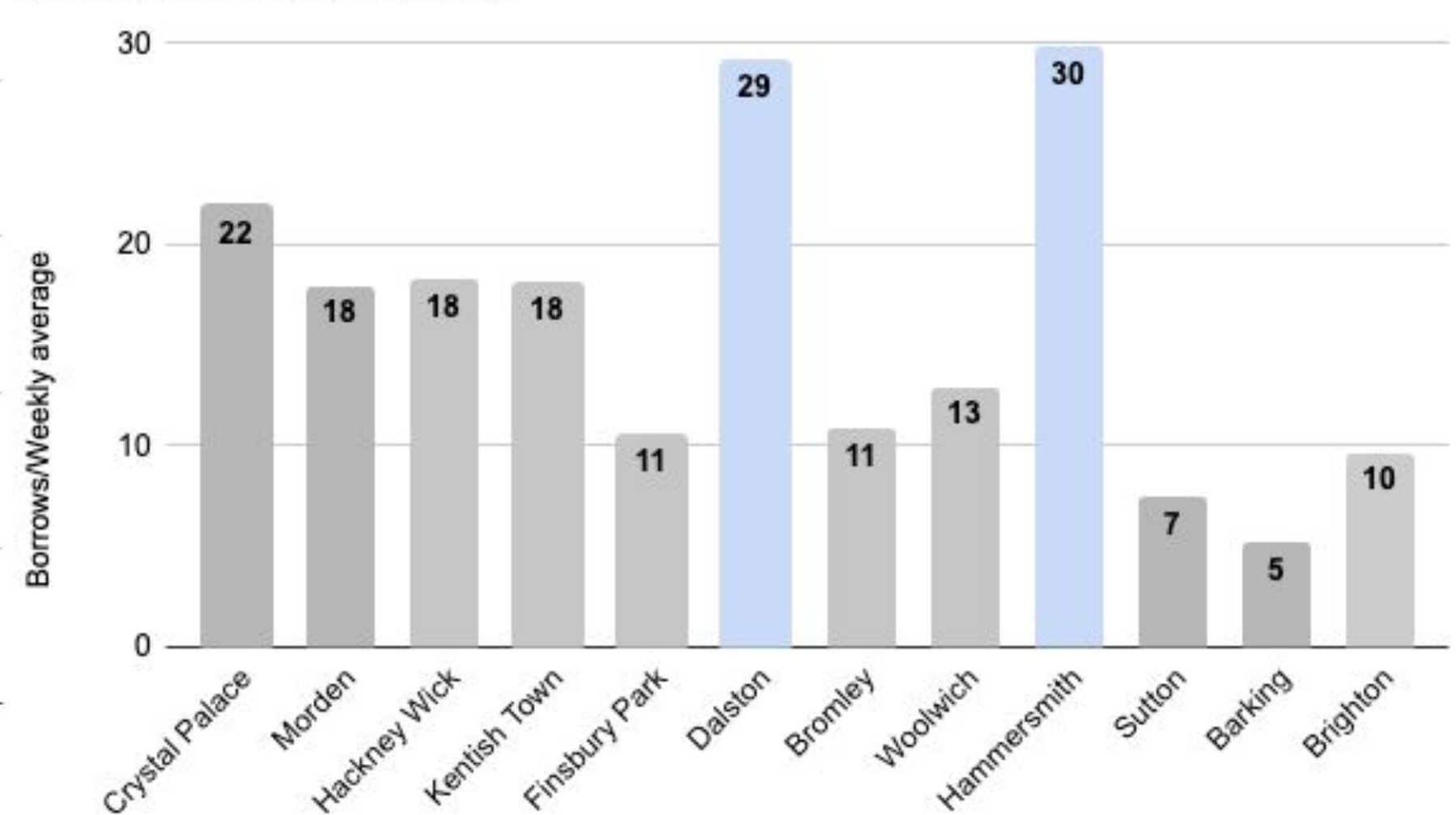
 Hackney

Performance

Impact data from the opening until Dec 2023



Average borrows a week since opening per site



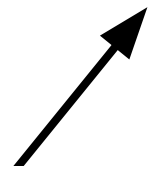
- Usage grown and currently steady at 47 borrows a week
- Hammersmith and Hackney top sites
- Hammersmith's site is inside a mall with 500,000 visitors a month
- Dalston has c17,000 visitors a month
- Crystal Palace was 1st site - 3rd best, likely due to being more established

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Items borrowed per quarter by site

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Location	Q1 (Jan-Mar)	Q2 (Apr-Jun)	Q3 (Jul-Sep)	Q4 (Oct-Dec)	Total	Launch Month
Dalston	528	707	607	584	2426	Dec 21
Hammersmith	393	602	638	453	2086	Jun 22
Crystal Palace	375	507	513	410	1805	Apr 18
Hackney Wick	308	457	466	362	1593	Jun 21
Kentish Town	273	396	402	251	1322	Sep 21
Morden	210	347	344	265	1166	Mar 21
Woolwich	183	335	315	233	1066	Mar 22
Brighton & Hove	108	60	83	?	251	Oct 22
Bromley	95	278	233	123	729	Mar 22
Sutton	57	205	193	90	545	Jul 22
Barking	51	131	97	62	341	Aug 22
Kilburn	10	244	218	180	652	Mar 23
Finsbury Park	0	?	?	?	0	Nov 21
Canada Water	NA	11	331	307	649	Jun 23
Willesden Green	NA	NA	138	152	290	Jul 23
North Kensington	NA	NA	7	102	109	Sep 23
Wandsworth	NA	NA	NA	103	103	Nov 23

Green indicates site with most items borrowed per quarter in London (and Brighton)

➤ Operations & Maintenance



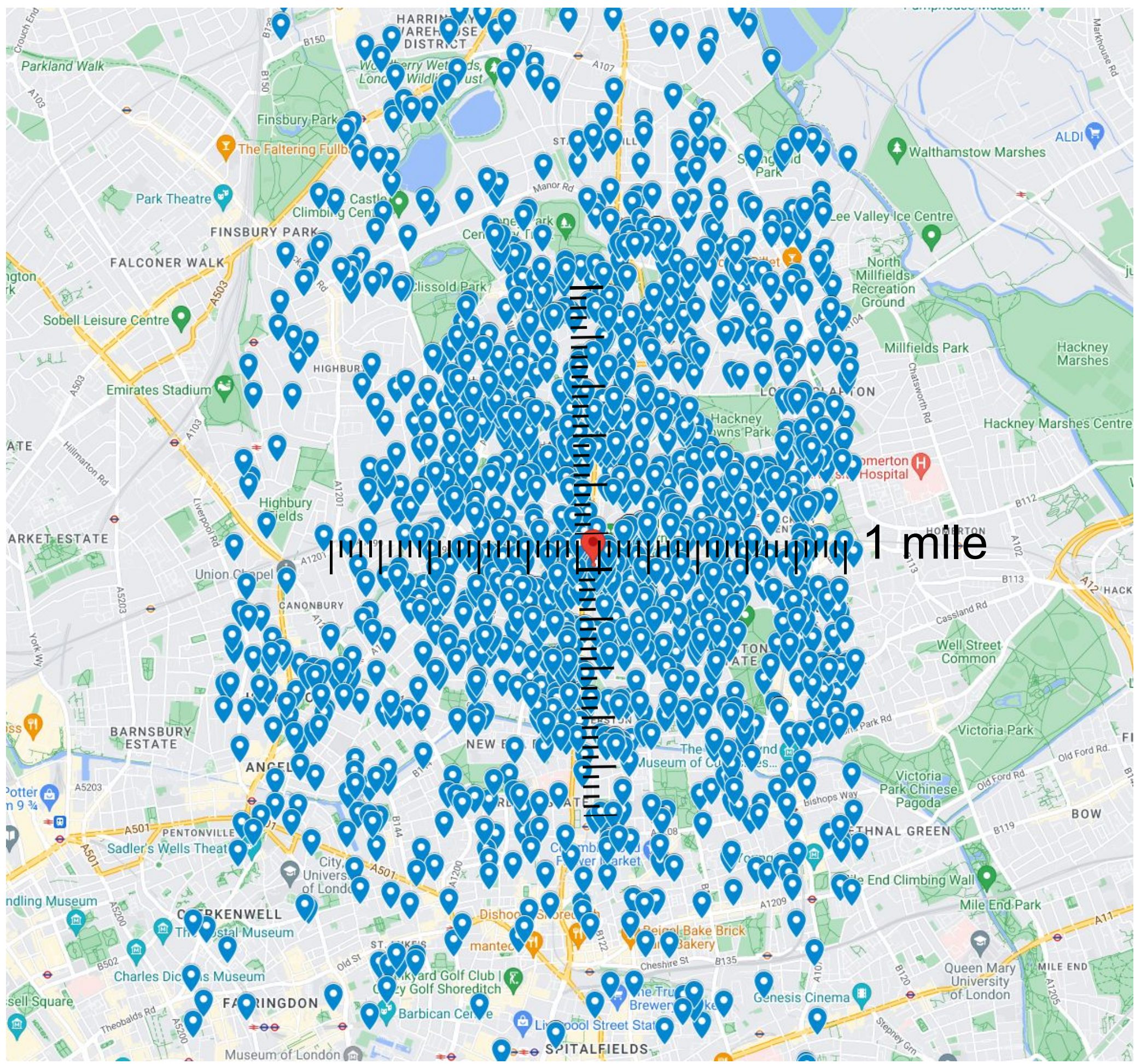
- Operating overheads: community marketer, technician, software, stock, print/dig ads, other fees and platform support
- Maintenance cost £10,000 a year
- Over 1,600 work items completed

➤ User & Usage data

- Demographic data (500 responses) for the whole network only. Hackney specific data available at a cost, not covered in the contract
- 73% white women and evenly split between the ages of 26 to 55
- 8% Asian/Asian British, Black/African/Caribbean 5%
- Other ages: 11% 55-65, 9% over 65 and 3% 18-25
- 57% first time borrowers and 43% repeat borrowers
- Usage peak for collections on Sat (11am) & Sunday (1pm). Returns Sat & Sun (4pm)



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Users by distance

Vast majority are within 1 mile



Impact in numbers since opening



- 4,000 'things' borrowed
- 2,600 people borrowing (new & returns)
- £0.5 m saved by residents
- 28 tonnes waste saved
- 84 tonnes CO2 saved
- 10,000 extra visitors

➤ Improving the service

- Increased number of items in the kiosk by introducing shared lockers. Eg. some lockers now have two drills or two humidifiers
- Added another carpet cleaner
- Getting things delivered to users' doors
- Tried new items like gaming consoles and thermal imaging cameras
- Each locker at Dalston has 13amp socket where users are encouraged to plug in the battery
- Ops Team weekly meetings review repairs and replacements



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➤ Promotion & Recognition



Cllr Mete Coban MBE • 1st
 Councillor for Stoke Newington & Chief Executive at My Life My Say
 2yr • 🌐

It was brilliant to join BBC News to showcase our new Dalston [Library of Things](#) - where people can borrow items to get their household jobs done cheaper.

This is part of our commitment to build a circular economy, reduce waste and tackle the climate crisis 🙌🌍

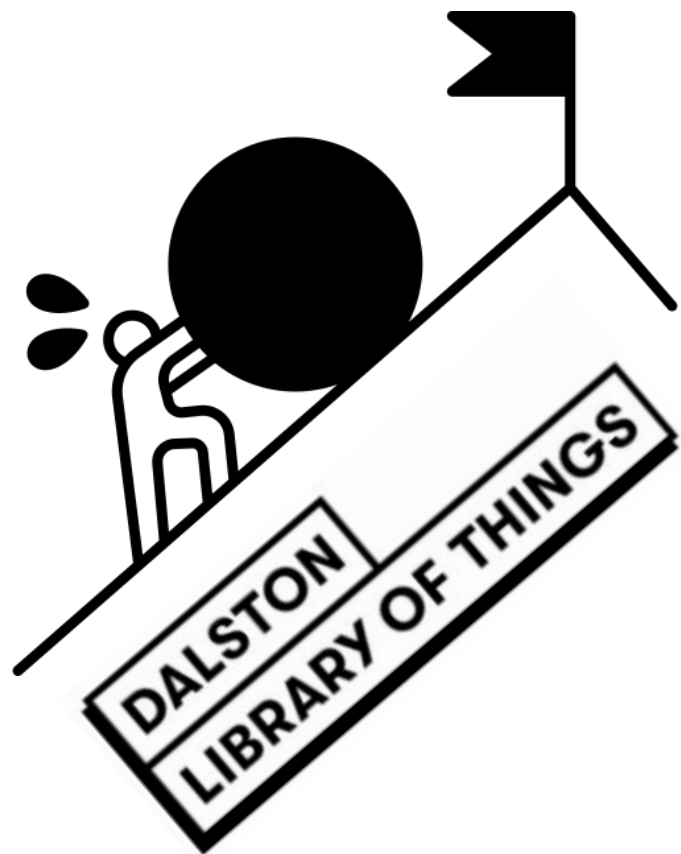


- Online social media advertising, newsletters, leaflets, lampost banner, free voucher schemes, national press
- Awards: LARAC, Awards for Excellence, National Recycling Awards, LGC, Apolitical



Managing risks and challenges

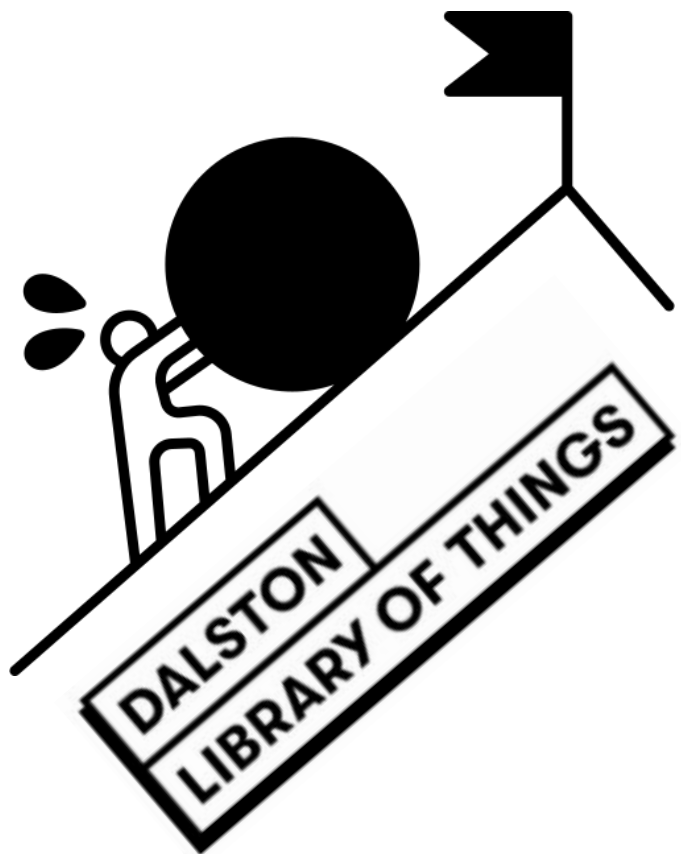
Part 1



- **Limited storage** for spare part to fix broken items. More lockers would make it more useful for repairing, but there is no storage in Dalston (Hackney archive and Stoke Newington items coming)
- Reliability around **water based equipment** – carpet cleaners do break and are a network wide problem
- More users increase technician time, spare parts required and **replacement costs**
- Ensuring users **adhere to T&Cs** (eg, tools being powered up when returning them and keeping items cleaned)
- Whilst 'Library of Things' would like to open more sites in Hackney, the Climate Team is unable due to:
 - 1-Cost:** New installation site is £40,000
 - 2-Staff resource:** Already committed to a range of climate actions
 - 3-Uncertainty:** Whether site would reach minimum level required to be **financially sustainable** in untested areas

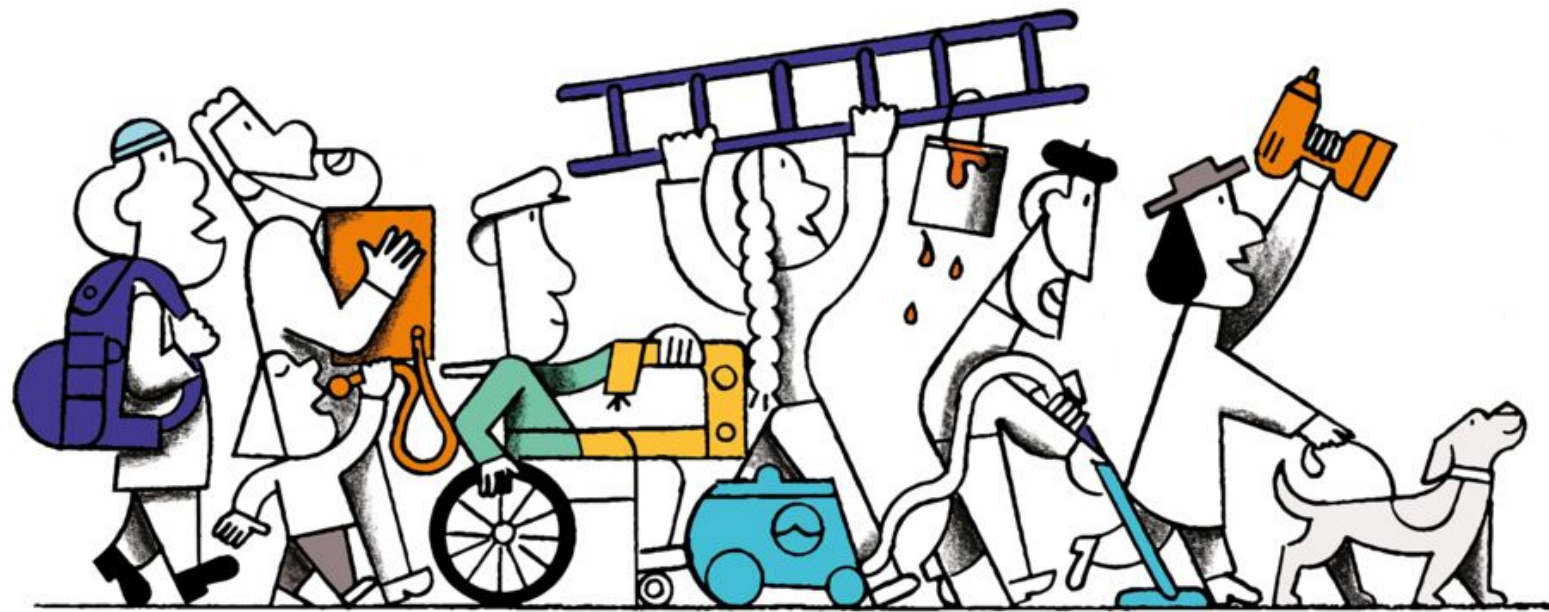
Managing risks and challenges

Part 2



- Potential to do a **feasibility study to open a site** in Stoke Newington or Stamford Hill libraries by Library Team with Climate support
Opening a **new site in Hackney will reduce borrowings in Dalston**, which will reduce income and may also mean that the Council pays for the shortfall. This would depend on location, but more openings can lift all locations through a 'network effect'
- Reaching out to those in **lower incomes** whilst reaching revenue to meet operational costs – obtaining Hackney data
- **Contract ends** July 2025: Decision to extend contract (STA) subject to any proposed contract variations

Take Aways



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- High user **satisfaction**
- Users claim a **reduction in consumption** behaviour
- Dalston site has currently **no ongoing financial** cost to the Council
- Success is down to prime **location** within library and in Hackney, ongoing promotion and the level of **collaboration** between LoT and Climate Team
- Opening a new site comes with **financial & staff commitment** which Climate Team can not commit
- **Feasibility** study to open a site in one more library to be lead by Libraries Team
- **Decision** needs to be made before contract ends in July 2025 to procure/renew/end



➤ Ander Zabala - Sustainability & Climate Service Group Manager

➤ Rebecca Trevalyan, Cofounder & Director, Library of Things



➤ Supporting slides



➤ Borrowing by item (2023)



Ranl Thing	Category	Borrows	% total
1 Carpet Cleaner	Cleaning	339	14.0%
2 Drill (cordless)	DIY	278	11.5%
3 Hand Sander	DIY	140	5.8%
4 Steam Cleaner	Cleaning	119	4.9%
5 SDS Drill (corded)	DIY	92	3.8%

Carpet cleaners & Cordless Drill top items



Carpet Cleaner
£25 per day



Heavy Duty Pressure Washer
£17.50 per day



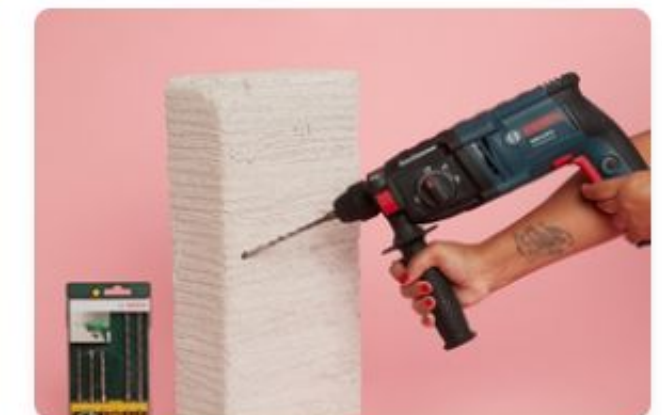
Drill (cordless)
£6 per day



Hand Sander
£8.50 per day

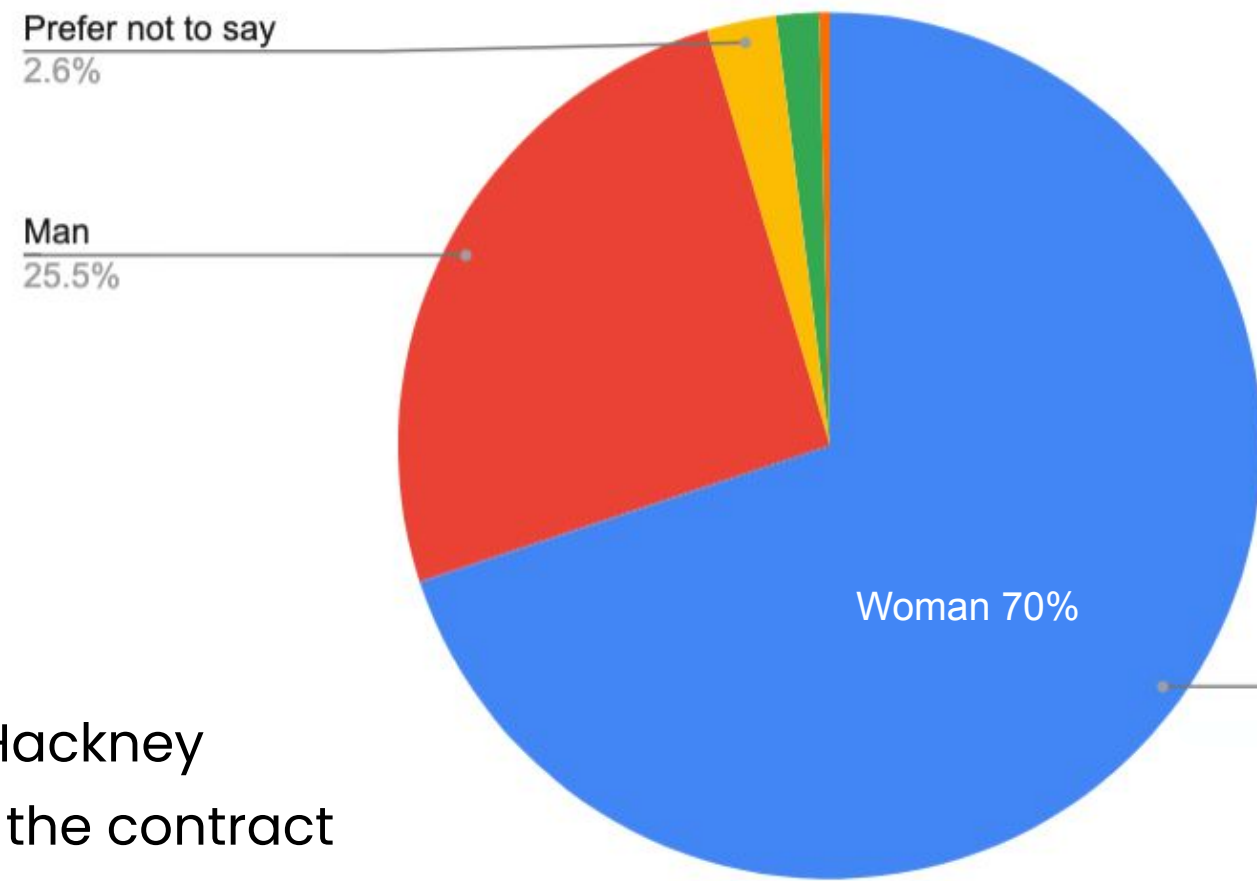
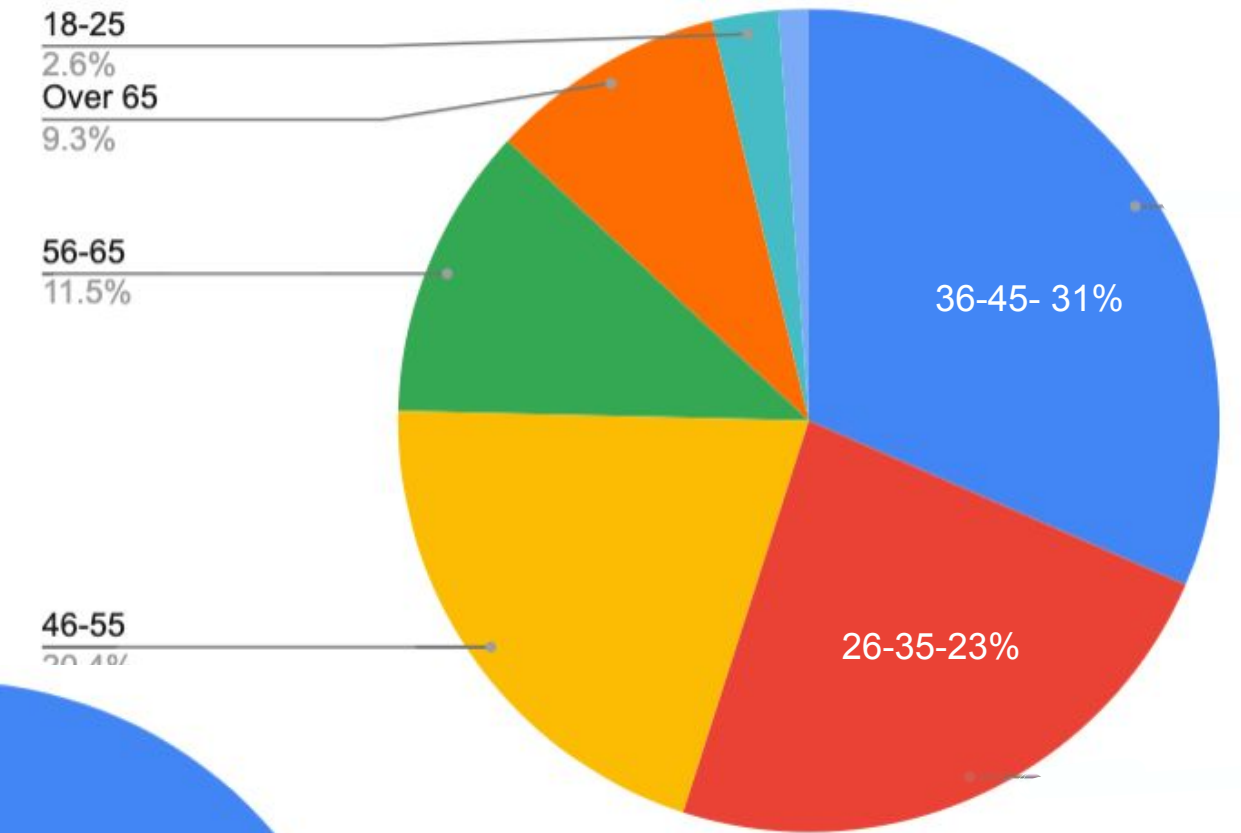
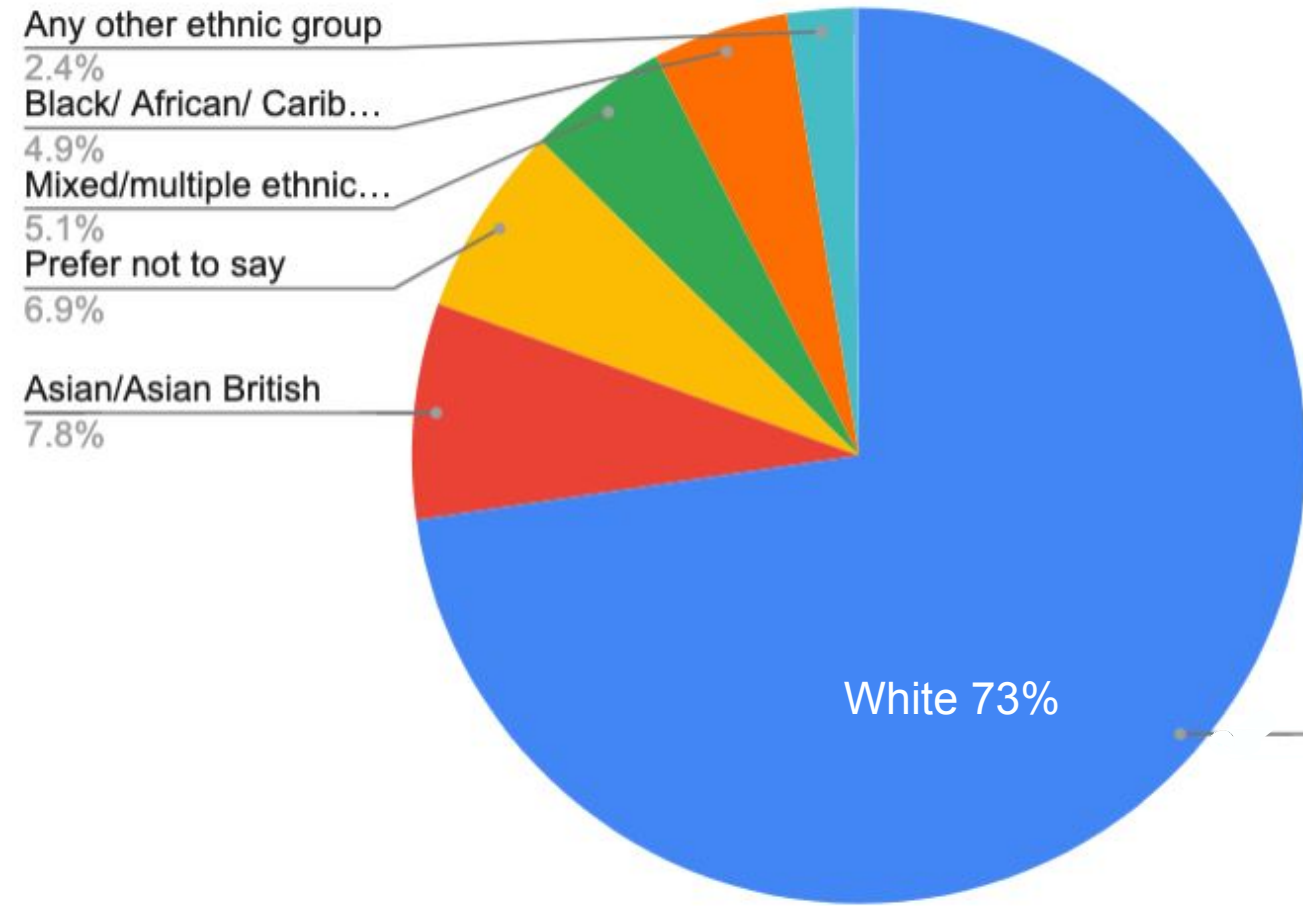


Steam Cleaner
£11 per day



SDS Drill (corded)
£8.50 per day

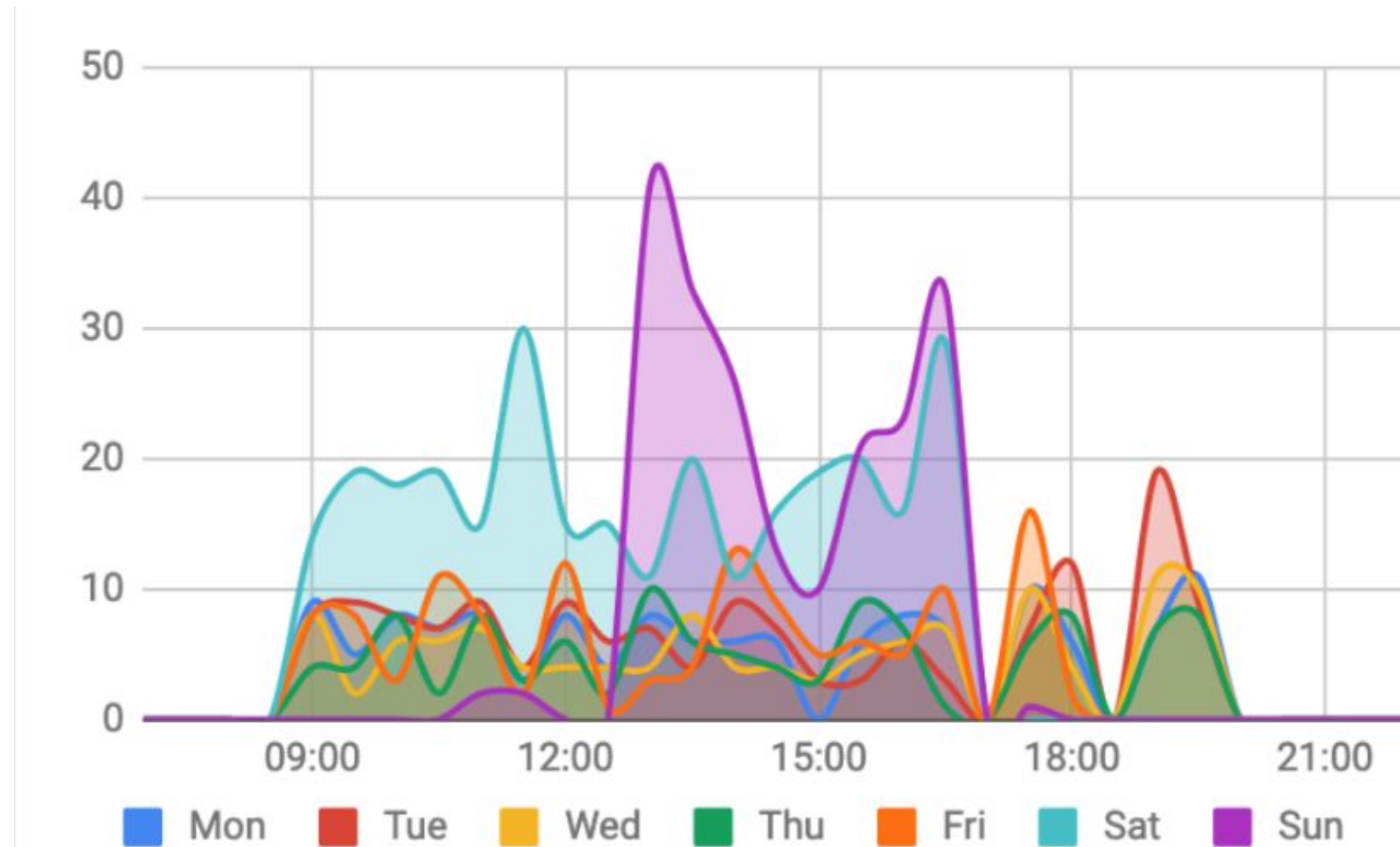
London wide user survey data - Jan 2024



- Mostly white women
- Evenly split between the ages of 26 to 55
- 500 responses
- Demographic data for the whole network only. Hackney specific data available at a cost, not covered in the contract



Collection and Returns by day and time



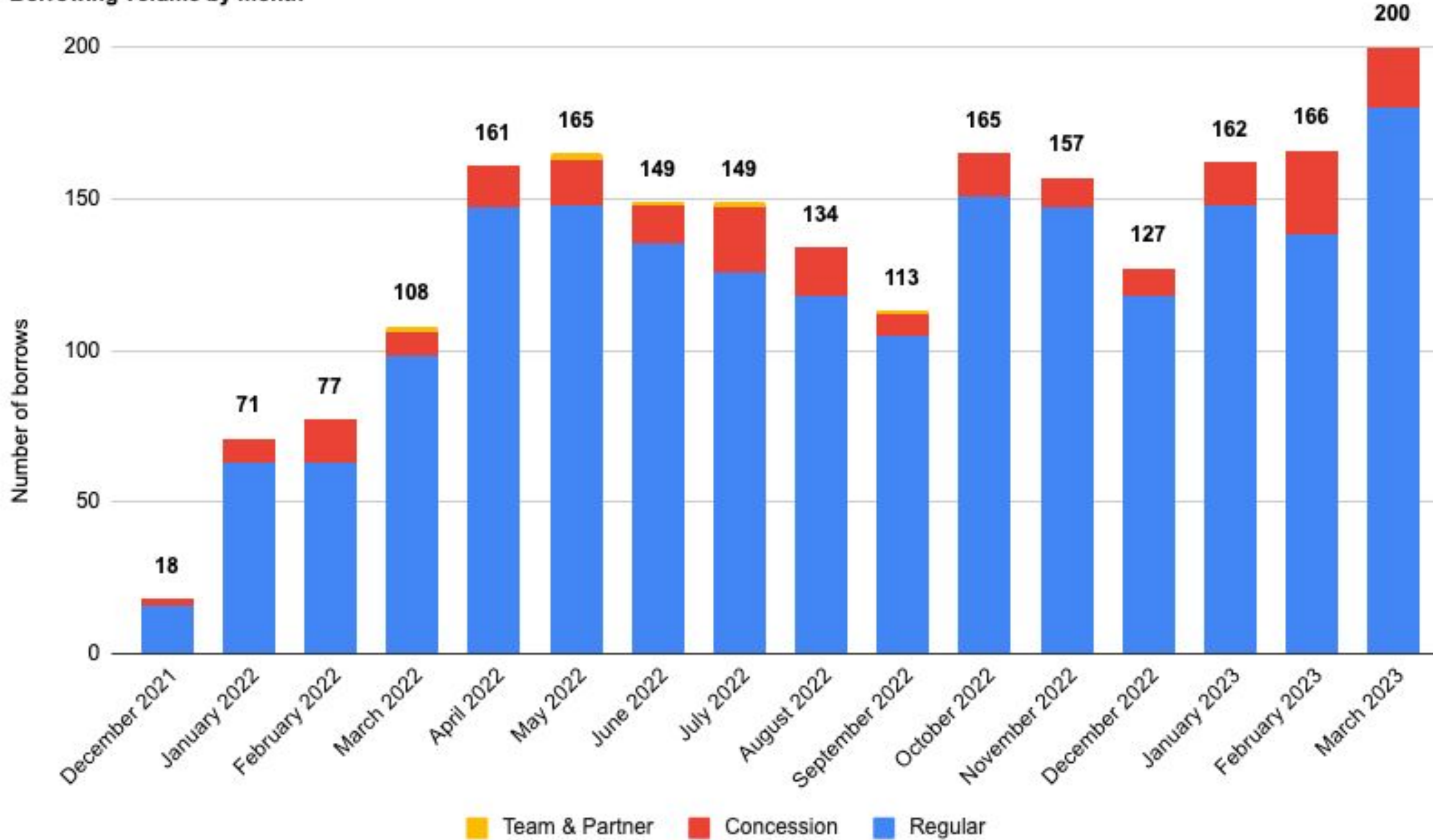
Usage peaks

Collections Saturday 11am and Sunday 1pm

Returns Saturday and Sunday 4pm

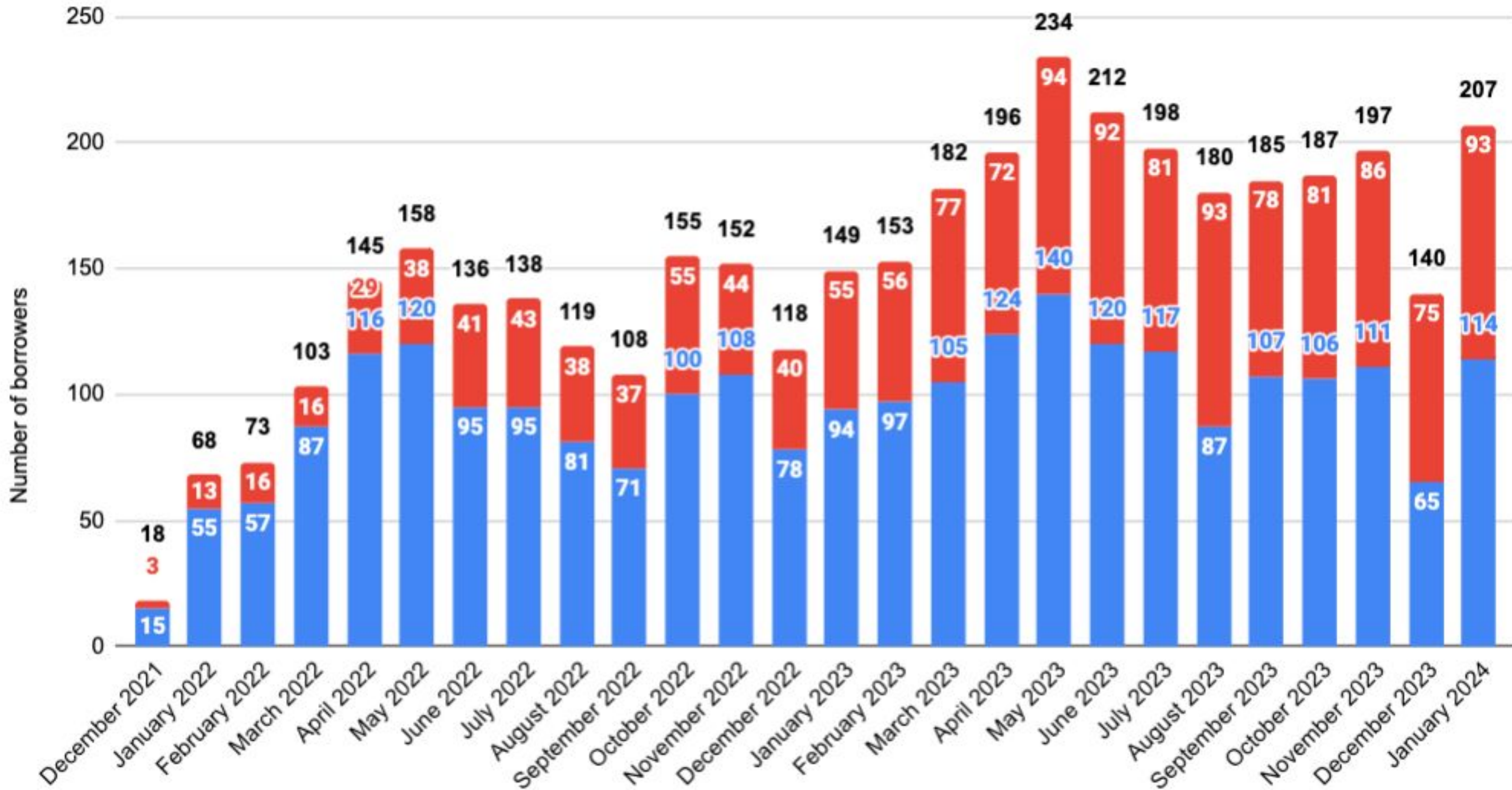
Concessions 10%

Borrowing volume by month



New & Returning Users

Borrowers by month



Repeat First time

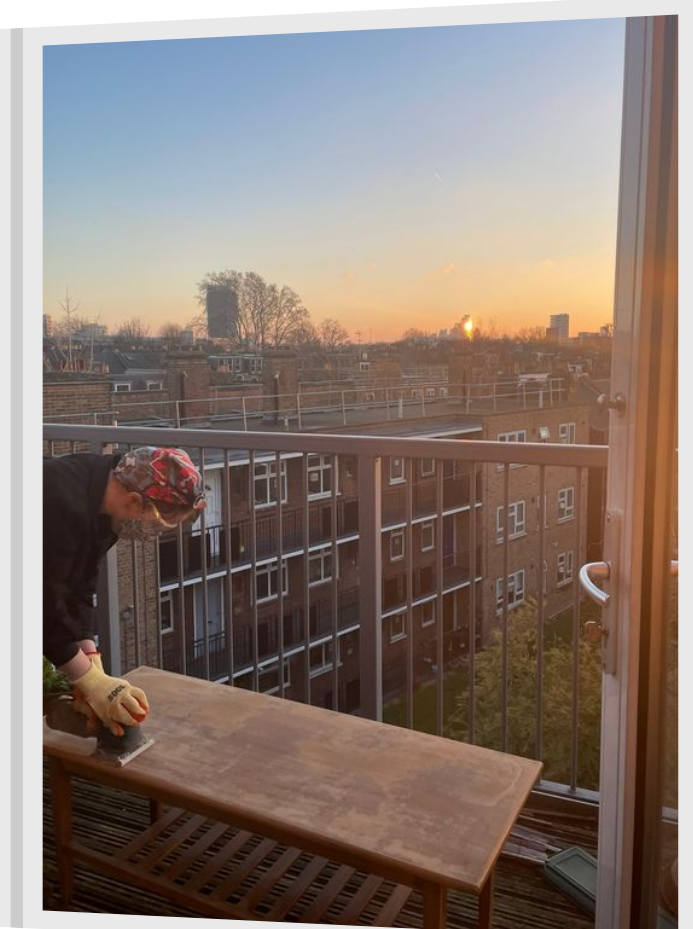
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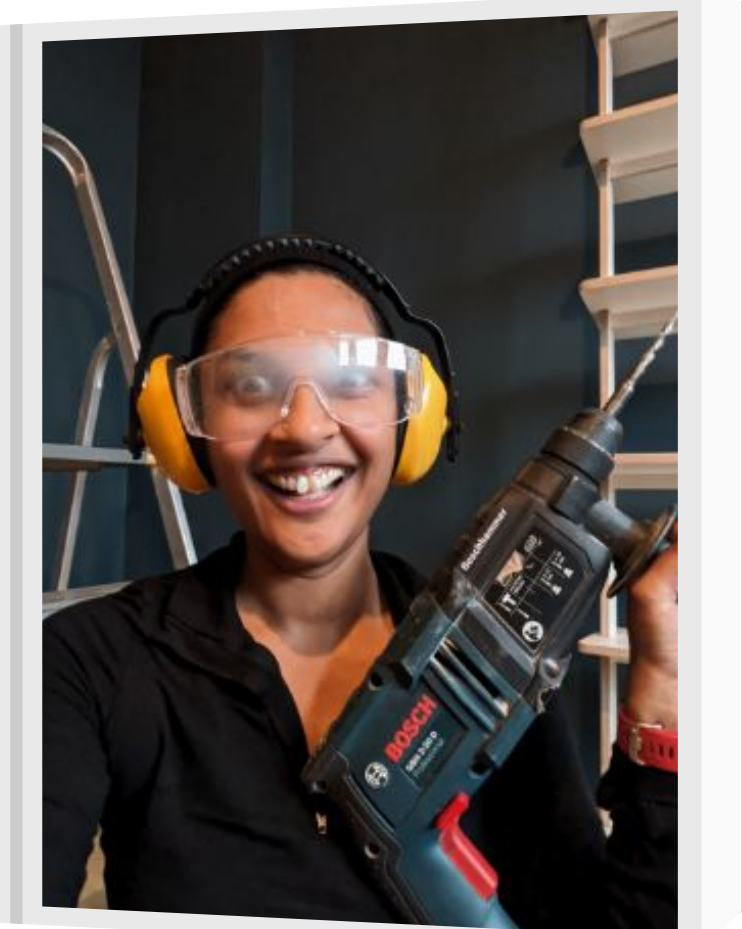
Flytips upcycled (Lucy)

“I **found a table on the street** but it needed some love. I was thrilled to find an electric sander. I spent the weekend bringing the table back to life as the perfect addition to my new home”



Learning new skills (Emily)

“I spent ages looking at possible handymen and it was all so expensive. I borrowed the SDS drill – so **simple to pick up**, with goggles, ear defenders, and a guide on how to use it. So cheap, so easy, and such a great sense of achievement”



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