

LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE CITY



LCF's report on the state of the city: London is a dynamic city full of diversity. With more citizen engagement than ever before, it is our time to thrive.

What's next for London? It's our time for change

LARRY CORNIES

Run your index finger along the imaginary timeline of London's history and you'll sense some dramatic shifts and turns.

The spillways and moraines carved into the earth by retreating prehistoric glaciers became the hills and waterways that sustained aboriginal peoples as early as 9000 BCE. Their descendants would come to refer to the river that ran among them as Askunessippi — “the antlered river”. Over time, it became much more than a flowing stream: it was a source of sustenance, a point of identity, a catalyst of community.

Feel that shift in the timeline during the 1700s? It marks the arrival of European immigrants. They saw the potential of the village at the river's forks as the commercial and administrative centre for the great swath of Upper Canada that lay between Lakes Erie and Huron. Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe's hope that the settlement along the forked river would become the capital of Upper Canada didn't come to pass, but his new name for the waterway stuck. It became the Thames and the village of London, named after the British capital, entered its phase as a commercial, judicial, and government hub.

The shifts in our timeline are coming fast and furious now. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, the mid- to latter-1800s brought the construction of roads and bridges, the arrival of the railroad, and the establishment of a garrison in the burgeoning community. Even a fire that destroyed a fifth of the town in 1845 couldn't slow progress. Rebuilding followed quickly, as factories and industrial activity of all types supplemented the commercial and administrative focus of the town. London became a city on January 1st, 1855, and, in 1881, added an educational dimension to its increasingly variegated identity: it welcomed students to the “Western University of London, Ontario”.



London's story is rich with history. With change on the horizon, we look forward to see what comes next.

Over the course of the 20th century, London underwent yet another shift: Its economy diversified as its industrial sector expanded. Manufacturing, from appliances to adhesives to furniture to locomotives, grew steadily, as entrepreneurs grew businesses that would become household names across the country. Transportation links in the form of 400-series highways, rail lines and air connections helped promote robust economic activity.

The financial and insurance sectors found London's centralized location to be ideal for their operations, just as government, military and administrative offices had before them.

Among Canada's top dozen urban centres, it would be hard to find a city in which citizens are more engaged — with each other and the issues that are shaping their community — than London.

The region's economy, in fact, was such a perfectly representational amalgam of the activity of various Canadian economic sectors that London became an oft-used test-market city. It grew steadily, annexing huge tracts of adjoining countryside to accommodate burgeoning growth.

Which brings us to the 21st century

— and the next big shift in London's timeline.

A few personal notes: I knew very little about the London region's history in 1985, when our family of five relocated here from the central United States. I'd been born and raised in Essex County, so London wasn't unfamiliar territory — just largely unexplored.

By the time I finished graduate studies a year later, my wife and I hoped to stay. Put simply, we couldn't imagine raising our young family in a more suitable environment.

London had a vibrant arts scene that included an art gallery, symphony orchestra and theatre. Road, rail and air links to other parts of the country were robust and convenient. Parks were plentiful. The education infrastructure, from elementary schools to the university and college, seemed strong and accessible. Recreational opportunities were varied — and growing. The family-friendly city seemed the near-perfect balance between the small town and the huge metropolis.

Over the past 29 years, we've not once regretted that decision. London became home. Our children are on their own now — and the city to which we moved when they were little more than toddlers became the springboard for their lives as confident, productive and independent adults. Deep down, I suspect they'll always call it home.

But back to that timeline. What is the next big shift in the London's history — and where will it lead? We don't yet know all the answers, but we do know the shift has already begun.

Among Canada's top dozen urban centres, it would be hard to find a city in which citizens are more engaged — with each other and the issues that are shaping their community — than London. Creation of The London Plan, an official planning document to guide future city councils, took citizen participation to new highs. Check the hashtag #LdnOnt on any social media platform, and you'll find hundreds of residents debating and reflecting on pressing issues, often in real time as important decisions are made.

What is the next big shift in London's history — and where will it lead?

As new technology-based ventures spring up and digital content creation clusters thrive, older, heavier industries are reinvesting in plant modernization and product diversification. Researchers, educational institutions and community organizations are partnering in unprecedented ways to solve problems, local to global. The health-care sector remains vibrant, while a host of environmental organizations are raising their visibility and clout. And London Community Foundation, where assets have grown from \$5,000 to \$65 million over little more than a half-century, is building capacity for leadership, problem solving and community involvement. Its “Back to the River” project is a truly inspired proposal that aims to foster community life, environmental protection and economic development by looking to the Thames River once more as a source of inspiration, sustenance, identity and community.

London has always been a great place to live, prosper and invest.

It still is. And among its many crown jewels are the skilled professionals, talented volunteers, committed philanthropists and engaged citizens that make a city a home. Read more about them on the pages that follow.

Larry Cornies is a London-based journalist and coordinator of the print and broadcast journalism programs at Conestoga College.



A landmark of the Thames River, the Walter J. Blackburn Memorial Fountain is a seven jet fountain that shoots water up to 30 metres into the air. Financed by a \$450,000 donation from the Blackburn Family, the fountain is a symbol of community vitality.

Back to the river

FRED GALLOWAY

With such a rich history behind it, the Thames River is not simply a landmark for the city of London. It is so much more. The Thames River is inexorably tied to London's identity. Representing its past, the early settlers saw the great value the river possessed in terms of sustenance, transportation, industry and life. Despite its historical significance, in recent years as a community, London has moved away from its roots, furthering itself more and more from this vast resource that was once synonymous with community vitality.

“The Thames River has and continues to be one of London’s most definable community resources that contributes significant economic, recreation, social and other benefits that are highly valued by Londoners and central to London’s story – past, present and future.”

– Martha Powell, President & CEO
London Community Foundation

The Thames River is the heart of London: past, present and future. Though in present day its significance may not be as evident, the time has come for London to rediscover the value of this city’s landmark and go back to the river.

Back to the River, quite literally, is where the London Community Foundation plans to go. One of its most visionary proposals yet, the Foundation will be spearheading a two-tiered international/North American design competition to redevelop the land along the Thames River. Striving to enhance community quality of life, environmental and economic development, the goal is simple: give Londoners a place to work, to play and call home. Give Londoners a place that brings the entire community together.

Tier 1 of the project, focuses on the stretch of the river between Oxford Street and Adelaide Street South bridges and calls for a 20-year strategy that would build on existing development opportunities like a string of pearls along the river.

Tier 2, focuses on the stretch between Wellington Street and Adelaide Street South bridges and calls for a ten-year development strategy focused on specific initiatives that capture the unique opportunities



London’s Thames River is the heart of the city. A significant part of London’s identity, it has the power to bring the community together.

available along the river with a specific outcome of this work being an inaugural project.

London Community Foundation is so committed to this river project that it has established connections with the City of Pittsburgh and RiverLife – Pittsburgh’s coalition of groups responsible for the amazing revitalization of that city’s riverfront. What has happened in Pittsburgh in the last fifteen years has been nothing short of remarkable and has helped that city find its feet again. The economic benefits derived from that effort have successfully rebooted the local economy and re-established a strong sense of community pride. London Community Foundation is determined to spearhead the effort to bring similar benefit to the fair city of London by reaching out to Pittsburgh’s leaders for their vision and expertise. That’s how much the Foundation believes in this grand project.

“Change occurs when people believe in it,” says Powell. “The Foundation believes in London and I know this project has the power to bring new life to our community.”

Martha Powell, President & CEO of London Community Foundation says, “We’ve seen the power of river revitalization projects in other communities across North America and the impact is astounding. We are ready to embrace this ambitious goal in London. The revitalization of the Thames River has the power to

mobilize Londoners and bring new life to our community; this is game changing.”

The Foundation is proud to have London’s city council, Fanshawe College, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, along with various other community groups supporting this project. Additionally, we have received a gift of \$100,000 from the Mitchell and Kathryn Baran Family Foundation. The Foundation has been truly encouraged by the support from the London community.

“The Thames River has and continues to be one of London’s most definable community resources that contributes significant economic recreation, social and other benefits highly valued by Londoners and central to London’s story- past, present and future,” says Powell. “That is why we believe so strongly this project has the power to catalyze community change.”

Set to launch in 2015, there is no doubt this project has the ability to change how the rest of the world sees Canada’s London. With community mobilization being a pillar of the Foundation’s upcoming strategic plan, the hope is this project will inspire community change by convening the right people in the right way.

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London Community Foundation

Fred Galloway is Vice Chair, Board of Directors & Chair, Strategic Visioning Committee, London Community Foundation.

Ten reasons people choose community foundations

1

We are a local organization with deep roots in the community, and part of a nationwide movement whose support we build and share.

2

We bring donors to the table as community builders, working closely with them to align their philanthropic vision with the community's needs.

3

We identify long-term needs and opportunities and invest in solutions that let our communities guide their own future.

4

We take a broad and inclusive view of what a community is, and provide grants to the widest possible range of organizations and initiatives.

5

We provide highly personal and flexible service, accepting a wide variety of assets and offering donors maximum tax advantage.

6

We build permanent funds and those that can respond to immediate needs, helping our communities ensure vital futures.

7

We multiply the impact of gift dollars by pooling them with other gifts.

8

We believe that diversity is strength, so we bring the entire community together to stimulate new ideas, build participation and strengthen community philanthropy.

9

We are transparent and reputable stewards of community resources, committed to being accountable, accessible and responsive.

10

We build community vitality – the unique and essential spirit that flourishes when people believe their community holds possibilities for everyone.

Care about London. Care about making it better.

MARTHA POWELL
PRESIDENT AND CEO

For 60 years London Community Foundation has been committed to building a smarter, more caring community by granting to the areas that need it most. Mobilizing community, making high impact, strategic grants to innovative projects, there is no doubt we are driving community-wide change in London, Ontario.

Our city is certainly not without its challenges. We continue to face increasing poverty, unemployment as well as a dire need for affordable housing. Yes, we have a lot of work to do, and it depends upon citizen engagement.

In 2014 we witnessed outstanding citizen driven developments such as the London Plan and the London X conference. It is quite evident citizens are truly the ones who make their communities. While the idea that we have a reciprocal relationship with our community certainly isn't a new one, this is a concept we have begun to embrace wholeheartedly in our new strategic plan. Bringing together people of all walks of life to create change, we are taking community engagement to the next level.

With Back to the River and a number of other game-changing initiatives on the horizon, we are inspiring the people of London to give back to the community that gives to them. A city in transition, there has never been a more vital time to take action. Tackling local issues is not just about improving the physical state of the community and the well-being of individuals. It is also about collective impact. Sense of belonging, a sense of place and pride; this is what community is all about.

I challenge you to find your passion, discover what drives you, connect with a cause and take action. Get in touch with the Foundation and find out how you can get involved.

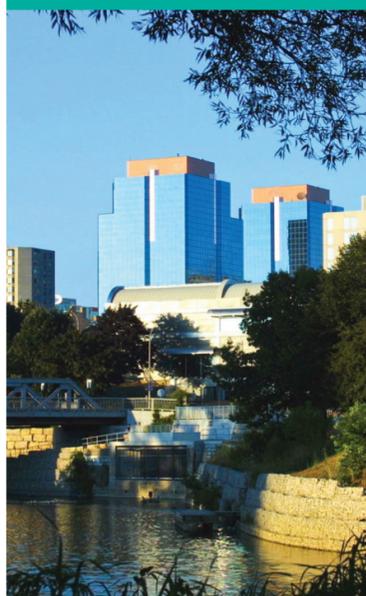
This is your London; your opportunity to make a change. Your community makes you and you make your community. It's up to you to figure out how.



Martha Powell

**Strategic.
Innovative.
Collaborative.
Game-changing.**

Building London and Middlesex Region as a smarter, more caring place to live, the Foundation's Community Vitality grant program invests in "game-changing" initiatives that will move the needle on London's most pressing issues. Supporting 360 degree granting, the Foundation strategically tackles the issues identified by our Vital Signs report. Each year Community Vitality grants are awarded to organizations that demonstrate innovative, collaborative and strategic projects. More bold and dynamic than ever before, this year we are investing \$1 million into the community through Community Vitality grants! Funded by the *Smart & Caring Community Fund*, we thank our donors for making London and Middlesex a more vibrant community.



THE FOUNDATION
of my community
starts with
you and me.



LONDON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Celebrating 60 years!

Canada's community foundations help communities where they need it the most, connecting people, families and companies with the causes that inspire them.

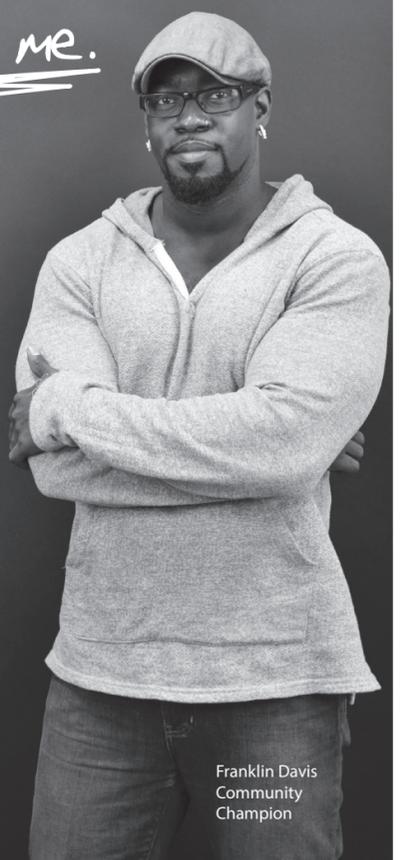
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You make your community.**

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Franklin Davis
Community
Champion

Turn the page to learn more about how London Community Foundation is driving change in London, Ontario...

London's Vital Signs®

GETTING STARTED

Communities, Career and Connect is a community development initiative that provides employment skills for youth by connecting them with skilled tradespeople to restore and beautify the Argyle Community. Led by Fanshawe College, Habitat for Humanity and Ontario Works, this unique initiative connects groups that have not traditionally worked together. Providing high-risk, unemployed youth with opportunities for skill development to

Unemployment Rate for Youth (15–24)

In 2013, the youth unemployment rate in London (CMA) was 17.4%. This was 3.7% above the national youth unemployment rate of 13.7% and 1.3% above the provincial average of 16.1%. The youth unemployment rate has decreased 2.9% from 20.3% in 2012.

(Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

revitalize and rejuvenate a community, Argyle Communities, Career and Connect is leveraging existing resources to foster, expand and support work in the Argyle Community.

With one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the country, London youth are struggling to get started. Lack of experience and a growing mismatch between education, skills and labour market needs are preventing youth in our community from finding steady, meaningful employment; this struggle is especially prevalent for youth of low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Employment Rate

• At 58.3% in 2013, London (CMA) had an employment rate 5.7% lower than the national rate (61.8%) and 5.0% lower than the provincial rate (61.4%). (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

Employment Growth

• In 2013, the employment level of London (CMA) was 244,900 people. Between 2012 and 2013, it saw a 1.2% decline. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)



Through the innovative Communities, Career & Connect initiative, London youth gain real employment skills while helping revitalize the Aryle neighbourhood.

Involuntary Part-time Workers

• In 2013, the proportion of total workers that were involuntary part-time workers in London (CMA) was 2.7%. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

Average Actual Hours Worked Per Week

• Workers in London (CMA) worked an average of 35.5 hours per week in 2013, down 5.3% from 2000 when workers worked 37.5 hours per week

on average. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

Unemployment Rate of Immigrants and Non-Immigrants

• In 2011, the unemployment rate of immigrants in London (CMA) who entered Canada within the last five years was 18.8%; 121.2% above the non-immigrant rate (8.5%). The rate was up from 12.4% in 2006. (Statistics Canada)

GAP BETWEEN RICH & POOR

Imagine a future without poverty. A community in which every person has an equal opportunity to thrive. This is the vision of the Poverty Research Centre. Led by the Sisters of St. Joseph, the London Food Bank and King's University College, the Poverty Research Centre will change the conversation about poverty in London by assembling local research on the lived experiences of those facing poverty. Shedding light on the necessary social, economic and political changes needed to end poverty in London, the initiative aims to inform the community and shape local policy response.

In London the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. Poverty is one of our community's most pressing issues. With staggering unemployment

due to the fall of London's large manufacturing sector, we have witnessed the far-reaching impact of this trend in other areas such as child poverty, mental health, housing, adult education and re-training.

Ontario Works Caseloads

• There is a monthly average of 10,976 Ontario Works caseloads in London in 2014. (City of London, Social Services)

Unemployment Rate

• In 2013, the unemployment rate for London (CMA) was 8.5%. This was above the national level (7.1%) and above the provincial level (7.5%). (Statistics Canada)

Living Wage

• In 2010, 35.4% of all earners in London (CMA) were not earning a living wage (had an annual income under \$20,000). (Statistics Canada)

Child Poverty

• In 2011, the child poverty rate in London (CMA), based on the after-tax Low Income Cut Off, was 8.0% down 33.9% from 12.1% in 2010. (Statistics Canada)



Poverty is entrenched in London. Understanding the lived experiences of those facing poverty will help us tackle the root of this problem.

In 2011, the overall poverty rate in London (CMA) based on the after-tax Low Income Cut Off (LICO), was 11.6%, up 6.4% from 2000 and 31.8% higher than the national average.

(Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics)

Poverty Rate of Single-Parent Families

• In 2010, the poverty rate of single-parent families in the London CMA was 35.3% compared to 14.2% in Canada and 17.3% in Ontario. (Statistics Canada, National Household Survey 2010)

Elderly Poverty

• In 2011, the poverty rate for the elderly in London (CMA), based on the after-tax Low Income Cut-Off (LICO), was 2.4%, up 300% from 0.6% in 2010. (Statistics Canada)

Immigrant Poverty

• Half of immigrant households live below the poverty line. (Ontario Non-profit Housing Association)

HOUSING

Housing is a priority if we want to tackle other issues such as mental health, addiction and unemployment. VHA Home HealthCare's Extreme Clean program does exactly that.

An innovative homelessness prevention program, Extreme Clean addresses the immediate and long-term needs of marginalized individuals and families faced with eviction and homelessness. By cleaning, educating and connecting their clients with the outreach services they need, Extreme Clean is helping keep individuals and families off the street.

Though London boasts some of the most affordable housing for buyers, there is a high proportion of Londoners who spend more than 30% of their income on rent. Moreover, for many receiving support from Ontario Works, more than half of their income can be spent on rent! Though wait times for affordable housing are improving, we still have a lot of work to do.

• 12 Canadian Forces Veterans experiencing Homelessness in London are achieving housing stability with support. (City of London)

"I'm speechless you know? I get up in the morning and before my feet hit the floor it's like thank you, turn the coffee maker on, jump in the shower, I have peace." – London Veteran

• The cost of one person in an emergency shelter for 30 days is \$1,500. (City of London)

• 94 Individuals are supported by London CARES through scattered site housing with support. On average there is an 85% success at housing retention (Housing Selection Workers work directly with landlords to support positive relationships and tenancy).

The Face of Homelessness in London – A Case Example:

Single male residing on the streets for almost 15 years

- High consumption of non-beverage alcohol
- Outdoors all day most days, including during extreme weather
- Frequent injuries related to falls from substance use or victim of violence
- Almost daily contact with Emergency Services (shelter, police, hospital ambulance)
- 259 visits in one year to the hospital emergency department

Today, as a result of the London CARES program this Londoner is housed in his own place with:

- 0 days in emergency shelters
- 2 visits to hospital emergency rooms (appropriate use)

• 0 occurrences with London Police Service (City of London)

Housing Affordability

• In 2013, the average rent for a bachelor apartment in London was \$582, which is equal to 96% of the Ontario Works cheque for a single adult. (The London Plan)

• Forty-five percent of tenant households spend 30% or more of their gross monthly income on rent. (The London Plan)

Affordable Housing

• Between 2005 and 2013, the City of London helped create 1,288 new affordable rental homes in 45 housing projects. (Ontario Non-profit Housing Association)

• In 2013, 2,341 households were waiting for rent-geared-to-income housing in London. This is a 7.8% increase from 2012. (Ontario Non-profit Housing Association)

London & St. Thomas Average Housing Prices 2014 (YTD)

• Detached- \$271,219

• Condo- \$183, 359

• Total Residential- \$254,113 (London St Thomas Association of Realtors)



When people in our community are safely housed, our whole community thrives. With the help of Extreme Clean, individuals on the verge of homelessness gain the self-esteem and power to remain off the streets.

The average wait time for social or affordable housing for a family in 2013 was 1.5 years. (City of London)

CMA: Census Metropolitan Area
LICO: Low Income Cut-Off
Social Housing: rental housing subsidized by the government
Affordable Housing: Housing which is less than 30% of before-tax household income. May include temporary or permanent housing.

Report 2014

LEARNING

A mom of six, Tara found herself living off social assistance and unable to find work after being laid off from her job working in a local factory. Without a high school diploma, Tara struggled to find meaningful work. With a desire to turn her life around and become a positive role model for her kids, Tara discovered Literacy London where she was able to complete several high school diploma credits. Now, Tara aspires to attend Fanshawe College for social work or medical radiation technology. Literacy London is one of the primary organizations that adults turn to when they need to upgrade their education. Offering one-on-one training in reading, writing, numeracy and computer skills, Literacy London has helped countless numbers of adults turn their lives around.

With the decline of the manufacturing

1 in 5 adults in London is functioning at the lowest level of literacy, often unable to read basic signs and medicine instructions.
(Child & Youth Network)

industry in London we are seeing increasing rates of unemployment and skill mismatch. As a result more adults have to return to school to train for their second career. This proves to be a significant barrier as this can be a daunting process that takes a great deal of courage to begin.

Literacy in Adulthood

- Four out of ten adult Canadians aged 16 to 65 struggle with low literacy. (Statistics Canada, 2005)
- Less than 10% of Canadians who could benefit from literacy programs actually enroll. Research shows that lack of money, childcare and transportation are some of the barriers that prevent people from getting help. (ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation, 2001)

Literacy in Childhood

- At least 1 in 3 children in London ages 8 to 14 is not meeting the literacy and numeracy standards established by the province. (Child & Youth Network)
- 19%-23% of youth in London are failing to graduate from high school (within 5 years). (Child & Youth Network)



Adult learners are empowered to turn their lives around as they improve their literacy skills at Literacy London.

Post-Secondary Education

- In 2013, 52.5% of the population in London (CMA) aged 15 and older had received post-secondary education. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

Proportion of the Population (15 years and over) that have not completed High School

- In London (CMA), 16.9% of the population (15 years and over) in 2013 had not completed high school. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey)

Aboriginal High School Completion Rates for Persons Aged 25 to 64

- In 2011, 76.3% of the Aboriginal population aged 25 to 64 in London (CMA) had at least one certificate, diploma, or degree, a decrease of 0.9% from the 2006 rate of 77.2%. (Statistics Canada)

ENVIRONMENT

Over the past several years we have seen a great population gain in rural regions; most of those gains being made in areas adjacent to cities. With such a great population shift, there is a concern for environmental responsibility of the landscape. The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority has been working with landowners to improve and protect water throughout London and Middlesex region. By engaging citizens in water stewardship, great gains have been made in streams, rivers and groundwater resources.

The link between the health of local communities and the health of the local environment is clear. London and Middlesex County make up part of the most intensely farmed regions in Ontario while maintaining a large industrial base. The importance of

In London, an average of 194 litres per capita of water was used for residential use in 2013. The Forks Watershed, as well as most of the City of London and some surrounding areas, is supplied by the London municipal water system with its source being lakes Huron and Erie.
(City of London)

healthy soil resources and adequate supplies of clean and abundant surface and ground water is essential for agriculture, tourism and recreation. When a community's environment thrives, so do the people in it.

Energy Use

Energy use by sector in London in 2013 was as follows:

- 43% from the industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings and facilities;
- 33% from cars and trucks on London's roads, most of which is associated with personal vehicle use; and
- 24% from single-family residential homes (City of London, 2013 Community Energy & Greenhouse Gas Inventory)
- Total community energy use in London in 2013 was 57,000 terajoules, 14% above 1990 levels, but 2% below the peak in 2007. (City of London, 2013 Community Energy & Greenhouse Gas Inventory)

Energy Conservation

- Londoners use 6% less energy at home today than they did in 1990. (City of London)



Running through the heart of the city, the Thames River is London's lifeline symbolizing sustenance, growth and vitality.

Mean Temperatures

- In London in 2013, the hottest month had a mean maximum temperature of 26.2 degrees Celsius. (Canadian Meteorological Centre, Climate Information Branch, 1971-2013.)
- In 2013, London had a mean minimum temperature of -9.5 degrees Celsius in the coldest month. (Canadian Meteorological Centre, Climate Information Branch, 1971-2013.)

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- In total, London's greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 were 10% lower than they were in 1990 and 21% lower than emissions in 2002. (City of London, 2013 Community Energy & Greenhouse Gas Inventory)
- The total energy-based greenhouse gas emissions in London for 2013 were

2.9 million tonnes, expressed in terms of equivalent carbon dioxide (CO₂e). (City of London, 2013 Community Energy & Greenhouse Gas Inventory)

Precipitation

- In London, 1,020.5 mm of precipitation fell in 2013, an increase of 53.8% from 663.6 mm in 2012. (Canadian Meteorological Centre, Climate Information Branch, 1971-2013.)

Forest Cover

The Forks forest cover is 8.2%. This is lower than the Upper Thames average (11.3%) and considered too low for sustainability. The target for southern Ontario is 30% forest cover. (Upper Thames River Watershed Report Card, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority)

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

For Liam, a child who suffers from generalized anxiety disorder, simple everyday tasks such as going to school can be difficult to cope with. Thanks to the development of the innovative InterRAI child and youth suite of assessment tools, CPRI has been able to ensure that kids like Liam receive the care they need. The first integrated response tool for identifying and responding to child and youth mental health needs, the InterRAI suite of tools will create a streamlined system of service planning and delivery that will benefit children being treated for mental health related disorders in London and across the province.

Child and youth mental health concerns are rising. As our next generation of leaders, we have the responsibility to ensure that they receive the care they need to thrive. On the other hand, we are also seeing a rise in adult mental health related problems. With health care service providers reaching capacity, it is important to consider how our community is prepared to deliver care effectively.

Nearly one in five Ontario children under the age of 19 experiences a mental, emotional or behavioural disorder.
(South West Community Care Access Centre)

Children & Youth Mental Health

- 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence. (South West Community Care Access Centre)
- In 2013, 76% of respondents in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region aged 12-19 rated their mental health status as "excellent" or "very good". This represented a decrease of 3.8% from 79.8% in 2003. (Statistics Canada)

Mental Health

- At London hospital sites in the South West LHIN Region, Mental Health ER visits per quarter (every 3 months) fluctuate between 1,100 and 1,300. (Community Capacity Report for Mental Health & Addiction Services, South West LHIN)

Self-Rated Mental Health

- In 2013, 68.8% of respondents in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region rated their mental health status as "excellent" or "very good". This represented a decrease of 6.3% from 75.1% in 2003. (Statistics Canada)

Proportion of the Population 12 years and over without a regular medical doctor

- In 2013, 9.3% of the population aged 12 and over in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region did not have a



The InterRAI suite of tools will help children and youth get the help they need when they need it most.

regular medical doctor. (Statistics Canada)

Perceived Life Stress

- In 2013, 20.0% of the population aged 15 and over in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region reported experiencing quite a lot of stress on most days. This is 3.6% below the provincial level of 23.6% and 3.0% below the national level of 23%. (Statistics Canada)

Obesity Rates

- In 2013, the obesity rate for the population aged 18 and over in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region was 16.7%, down from 21.2% in 2012. (Statistics Canada)

Obesity Rates (Ages 12-17)

- In 2013 in South West LHIN Region, which includes London, 29.4% of the population (aged 12-17 years) reported that they were overweight or obese. This rate reflects an increase of 6.6% from its 2012 rate (22.8%). (Statistics Canada)

Physical Activity

- In 2013, 46.0% of the population aged 12 and over in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region reported being physically active or moderately active during leisure time. (Statistics Canada)

London, the food city? Some food for thought

GLEN PEARSON

When George Bernard Shaw noted that, "there is no love sincerer than the love of food", he could easily have been speaking about the London region – we are surrounded and motivated by some of the best food in the world.

The problem is that we have been experiencing great difficulty in organizing that bounty. For years we have witnessed the growth of groups emphasizing markets, organic food supplies, Carolinian forests, rooftop gardens, collective kitchens, to name only a few, and they have succeeded in driving the conversation about our collective need to regard food with more respect, sustainability, and even a key generator of our future economy. The one word missing in that list is a fundamental reason we have had trouble capitalizing on our local resources: coordination.

Yet we are experiencing significant difficulty getting there by convincing politicians, citizens, institutions, and even media, to initiate the changes necessary to turn London into a true food city – we want it, but we're just having trouble getting there.

We're not alone, as other cities can attest. Community Foundations Canada (CFC) has emphasized food – its growth, storage, distribution, nutritional and social value – as the key focus of its 2013 Vital Signs Report and recognized London Community Foundation (LCF) for its efforts to combine various initiatives in order to leave a larger food influence in our city and region. In the past two years, the Foundation has supported numerous initiatives, involving breakfast programs, networking, and education.

Two new initiatives supported by LCF have raised the possibilities of overall food success even higher. Wondering why the London Food Bank was required to feed 3,600 families a month while being surrounded with vast acreages of farmland,



The farmland surrounding London and Middlesex County is some of the most abundant in the country.

London Community Foundation helped to launch the London Poverty Research Centre, whose first important task is to explore ways of getting more nutritious and locally-produced foodstuffs closer to the locale of low-income families, thereby reducing the demand for food bank assistance. The Poverty Research Centre is a powerful partnership among the Sisters of St. Joseph, the London Food Bank, London Community Foundation, and King's University College that has opted to make access to better food its first project.

And the Foundation has been push-

ing for the establishment of a food policy council to cover all aspects pertaining to food in our city. To accomplish that goal, the Foundation has partnered with the City of London and the London Middlesex Health Unit to provide it both the impetus and resourcing for taking on the huge task of making sure that proper food policy helps to coordinate and enhance all the various initiatives going on in the city at the moment.

Demand for London Food Bank services has risen 40% in just the last five years. How can that be, considering we are a blessed area surrounded

Food Insecurity

In 2011, the proportion of households in the Middlesex-London Health Unit region that were moderately or severely food insecure was 6.9%. This was a rate 0.9% below the national rate of 7.8% and 0.8% below the provincial rate of 7.7%.

(Statistics Canada)

Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket

The Nutritious Food Basket survey, conducted annually by the Middlesex-London Health Unit, has shown consistently that people with low incomes do not have adequate funds to afford healthy eating, after meeting other essential needs for basic living. In 2013, the cost of the NFB for a family of 4 was \$786.50. This represents 37% of the monthly income of a family on Ontario Works.

(The Real Cost of Eating Well in Middlesex-London, Middlesex-London Health Unit, 2013)

by quality food? As a community we need to answer that question, not by more queries, but action. The time has come to coordinate all of our efforts so that food itself can become one of the defining characteristics of this great city. But that takes leadership and influence – two qualities London Community Foundation is now putting to good use.

Glen Pearson is the co-director of the London Food Bank and executive director of Canadian Aid for South Sudan. Glen is a regular columnist for the London Free Press.



Getting people housed is essential if we wish to effectively tackle other pressing issues in our community. Jean, a client of VHA Home HealthCare stands proudly in front of her home that is now liveable thanks to the Extreme Clean program, funded through the Foundation's Community Vitality grant program.

Affordable housing is a scarce reality for many

GREG PLAYFORD

Safe and affordable housing is a priority for all members of our community and something that is so often taken for granted. With a good supply of single family homes on the market and the apartment vacancy rate at a comfortable 3.30% (CMHC Fall, 2014), one would think it is not hard to find a suitable place to live. Unfortunately for many Londoners, what is available is not accessible or not appropriate due to size, location and most often, the cost.

In London, over 45% of tenant households are paying over 30% of their gross income for rent, almost 10% are paying 50% of their gross income. With the ever increasing cost of utilities, real housing costs are increasingly greater than wages and income supports. In 2010, the City of London Housing Strategy identified a target of 1,000 new affordable housing units in the next five years. We are approaching the end of that cycle and while excellent progress has been made to reach that target, the number of families on the local Housing

Registry Wait List is not declining and remains above 2,000. Other segments are particularly hard hit.

As reported in this year's Vital Signs Report, in 2011 the overall poverty rate was 11.6%; that's 31.8% higher than the national average. Furthermore, there is a monthly average of 10,500 Ontario Works caseloads in London, confirming the daily challenge that so many Londoners face.

There are some encouraging signs that new funding and resources will make more affordable housing available and hopefully improve on the current situation. The Homelessness Prevention & Housing Plan 2010 – 2024 was approved by London City Council in November, 2013 and outlines a broad ranging strategy to reduce the numbers of individuals and families becoming homeless, improve the stability of housing, reduce wait times and increase the supply of affordable rental units. More recently, in the last meeting of the current City Council, the creation of a Housing Development Corporation for the City was approved.

This arm's length entity will allow the City to secure land for new

housing, create partnerships for new developments and pursue different and innovative financing to upgrade and expand the City's supply of affordable housing. Assisting the City to meet its goals is new federal and provincial funding. The Investment in Affordable Housing Extension program was announced by the Province of Ontario on August 11, 2014 and confirmed that over \$800 million new capital dollars will be available between 2014 and 2019 to assist the development of new rental housing and other programming that improves the supply and affordability of housing. When combined with the funds the City of London has set aside, this new funding should provide London the financial resources to accomplish the goals that have been set out.

Critical to the success, however, is the co-operation of the non-profit and private sector developers that will build and manage the new housing. To achieve true affordable rents, all projects need to have owner equity and affordable debt to complement the government funding. London Community Foundation has created an

innovative Loan Fund that is available to developers of affordable housing in London and Middlesex County.

The program offers low interest loans that help fill the financing gaps and allow good projects from good proponents become reality. For London as a community to achieve its housing goals and improve the availability of safe, secure and affordable housing, a strong partnership of governments, community groups and financiers is needed and London Community Foundation looks forward to playing an important role.

Greg Playford is the president and owner of Devonshire Financial (London) Inc. and board member of Homes Unlimited (London) Inc.

45% of renters and 18% of homeowners spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs in 2011, putting them in financial stress. (Ontario Non-profit Housing Association)

Poverty & mental health:

Addressing challenges one step at a time

ABE OUDSHOORN

Many of our lives, and the lives of our friends and family, are touched by illness. Both physical and mental illnesses can have a significant impact on our lives, and are also not borne equally across our community. Mental illness in particular is strongly related to poverty. At times it is poverty that makes people at greater risk of mental health challenges, at times it is the advent of a mental health challenge that puts people at risk of poverty. Often, it is both.

There is no doubt that our mental health care system has had its challenges. From a history of aggressively institutionalizing people, we swung the pendulum the other way to moving people back into communities with limited support. Dealing with illness is difficult enough for individuals and their families, but facing a flawed system can have catastrophic effects, as evidenced by the number of individuals with mental health challenges encountering police and criminal justice systems.

However, this is the story of the past in our community. We are learning, we are evolving our systems, and we are, day-by-day, doing better. I reflect on the growth and enhancement of community-based mental health services in London, as evidenced most recently by the amalgamation of WOTCH, SEARCH, and CMHA into CMHA Middlesex. New programs and resources for mental health services are being invested where they are needed most, into the places where we live, work, play, and sometimes become ill. These programs show real promise to de-link poverty and mental illness, to show that the relationship is not inevitable.

At times it is poverty that makes people at greater risk of mental health challenges, at times it is the advent of a mental health challenge that puts people at risk of poverty. Often, it is both.

I think in particular of the work of Impact Junk Solutions. This program of CMHA Middlesex provides real employment opportunities to gain skills, an income, and a sense of pride to those touched by mental health challenges. At the same time, as a social enterprise, the revenue generated by their services provides CMHA the opportunity to deliver even more programs. This breaks down barriers and changes peoples' stories.

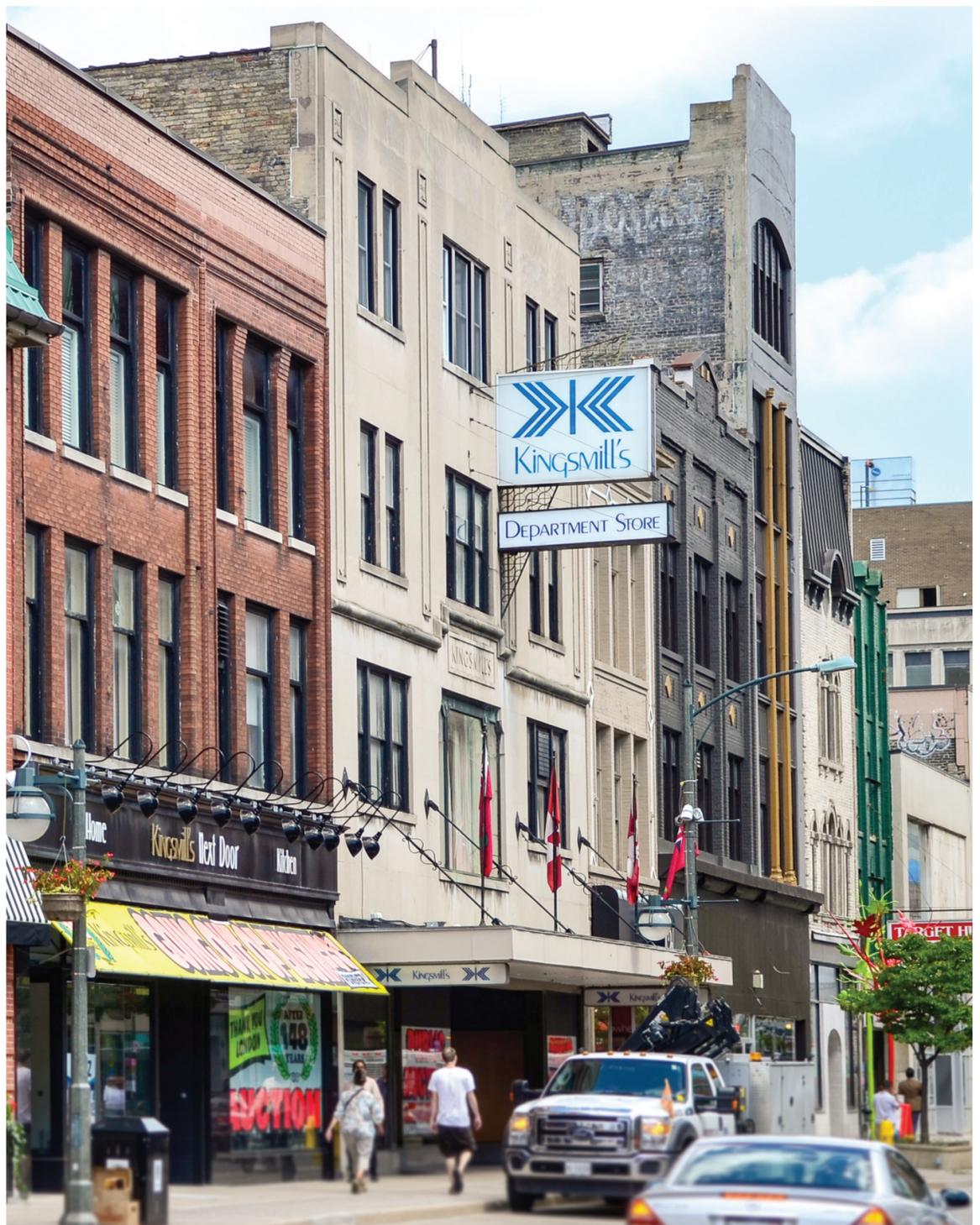
Yes, we still have a long way to go in responding perfectly to issues of mental health in our community, but London is already taking many steps in the right direction.

Abe Oudshoorn is a Registered Nurse and an assistant professor at the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing at Western University.

The volume of mental health calls that the London Police responded to increased by 39% from 1,743 in 2012 to 2,423 in 2013. (London Police Service)

In 2013, 68.8% of respondents in the Middlesex-London Health Unit Region rated their mental health status as "excellent" or "very good". This represented a decrease of 6.3 points from 75.1% in 2003. (Statistics Canada)

The average time spent on mental health calls decreased by 24% from 6.68 hours in 2012 to 5.1 hours in 2013. (London Police Service)



Fanshawe College's proposal to take over the Kingsmill's building is a great example of how engaged citizens have the power to create change.

Civic engagement begins with YOU!

Getting involved in the democratic processes of your community is free. Well mostly. It does take time, and you might have to shell out for coffee.

PHIL MCLEOD

Have you ever heard the expression, "Somebody ought to do something about that?"

Public participation, community engagement – it goes by various names, but the fact is the process of citizens getting involved is the fuel that runs successful democracies.

Increasingly, somebody in London is doing something to better life in the city for all of us. If that somebody isn't you, there's still lots of opportunities to help.

Some call participating in our community's affairs our responsibility as residents of London, although those people who've actually done it often say it was a privilege.

It is work. It can be fun too. And if you get fulfillment from being part of something that leads to more inclusive decision making, then it can be rewarding too.

And best of all, getting involved in the democratic processes of your community is free. Well mostly. It does take time, and you might have to shell out for coffee.

The good news is more Londoners are realizing this. ReThink London, the recent forums to create a new Official Plan drew more than 10,000 participants over its two-year lifespan and became one of the most successful citizen engagement events for a planning issue in Canadian history.

The result is we now have a blueprint for this city's future that has broader public support than ever before. While it makes some recommendations that are controversial, the new London Plan has garnered support from almost everyone on city council and a majority of candidates in the coming election. Politicians are loathe to go against public opinion when it's expressed in large numbers. That's often – although not always – the benefit of successful public engagement exercises. They can cause real change, often change that previously was thought impossible.

A good example of that is the recent drama over a city grant to Fanshawe College to buy the Kingsmill's department store property downtown to house its hospitality and information technology faculties. Council originally rejected the proposal but a public

social media campaign helped change council's mind.

Not every citizen engagement opportunity is as esoteric as building your city. For example, London became one of the first Canadian cities to be certified by the United Nations as 'seniors friendly' because of the work of a task force of local residents. Their many recommendations about everything from bus service to traffic lights to parks are now being implemented.

London also has a developing strategy to make its neighbourhoods stronger and more distinct, the result of another citizen task force that worked for a year on solutions.

And even when they fail, participants usually find the experience of meeting fellow citizens from different sections of town and different walks of life stimulating and enriching. Some strong and unusual friendships have been formed over debates about cul-de-sacs.

Not every citizen engagement must be on such a grand scale. At the neighbourhood level, there are often community associations that focus on very local issues. One in SoHo – that's south of Horton – got organized because a developer planned a 26-storey high rise smack in their middle. The developer seems to have disappeared, but the group continues to meet regularly as plans for the revitalization of the old hospital lands emerge.

There's probably such an association in your neighbourhood just waiting to welcome your ideas.

Still, the pity is more people in London don't get involved. In the last civic election, for example, of the 262,028 residents who were eligible to vote only 104,593 bothered to make the short trek to their nearby polling station.

And yes you're right, somebody ought to do something about that.

Hey, aren't YOU somebody?

Phil McLeod is a communicator and community activist in London, Ontario. He is a former journalist holding positions at the Toronto Star and the London Free Press as editor-in-chief. Phil was the co-founder and editor of The Londoner before retiring.

Volunteer Rate

In 2010, the volunteer rate for London (CMA) was 58.7%. This figure is 11.7% higher than the national level (47.0%) and 11.0% higher than the provincial level (47.7%). The volunteer rate increased 6.6 points from 52.1% in 2007. (Statistics Canada)

Percentage Voter Turnout for 2008 and 2011 Federal Elections

In 2011, the voter turnout in London (CMA) was 61.6%. The voter turnout increased 2.7% points from 58.9% in 2008. (Statistics Canada)

Population Reporting a Strong or Somewhat Strong Sense of Community Belonging

In 2013 in the Middlesex-London Health Unit, 62.4% of people aged 12 and over reported a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging, 6.4% lower than the 2012 level of 66.7%. (Statistics Canada)



Community change starts with you. By working together we can create a smarter, more caring community.

Thanks to our partners and sources

London Community Foundation's Vital Signs report would not be possible without the support of our many contributors and partners. Taking our city's pulse is a true collaborative effort and we are inspired by the energy and enthusiasm around this project. Thank you to all of the organizations and individuals who contributed time, talent and expertise to this project; you make your community!

*indicates individual or organization provided in-kind support

**indicates individual or organization provided financial support.

Abe Oudshoorn, <i>Western University</i>	Literacy London
*AM 1290 CJBK	London Food Bank
*Bookmark Photography	Louise Stevens, <i>City of London</i>
Children's Aid Society	Matt Feldberg, <i>City of London</i>
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Canadian Meteorological Centre	**Nicholson Sheffield Architects
Cate Patchett, <i>South West CCAC</i>	**PwC Canada
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Joan Atchison, <i>London Police Service</i>	
*Lashbrook Marketing & PR	

About London Community Foundation

London Community Foundation is a charitable organization that is dedicated to improving communities across London and Middlesex County.

Our goal is to continue building London as a *Smart & Caring Community* through collaboration, strategic leadership and innovative solutions to charitable giving.

To us, "Smart" means understanding the needs of the community and using our knowledge and expertise to tackle the tough issues. "Caring" is the passion that motivates us to act on our knowledge, facilitating community change and creating equal opportunities for all citizens.

Our Mission

Through the power of giving, we create a vibrant and caring

community by investing strategically in innovative community-based solutions.

Our Vision

A community working together so that each member has the opportunity for an enriched quality of life.

Our Goals

As strategic leaders, we build on our partnerships, convening successes and knowledge of community issues to drive change and solutions in our community.

Inspiring innovative solutions through the power of giving enables us to pursue and enhance our ability to engage existing and new philanthropists by offering new ways to give and provide exemplary donor stewardship and service.



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Mary Ann Colihan
Writer & Local
Food Advocate

What are the issues facing our community? How are we responding? Is there a way you can make a difference? These are just some of the questions tackled by Vital Signs, a national program of Canada's Community Foundations. This biennial report measures the vitality of the community by examining a variety of issues that are significant to our well-being and quality of life. This information is integral to helping us continue to build London as a *Smart & Caring Community*. Guiding

the Foundation's granting like a roadmap, Vital Signs provides the Foundation with the in-depth knowledge to make informed decisions about how to distribute our funds and direct our granting. A community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada, Vital Signs measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life.

*The Vital Signs trademark is used with permission from Community Foundations of Canada.

Compiled from current statistics and special studies, the report examines a variety of issues that are essential to the well-being of our community and its residents. Inspiring civic engagement, providing focus for public debate and informing community members of our greatest needs, Vital Signs is one of the many ways London Community Foundation drives community change.

How can I get involved? London's Vital Signs helps you understand the issues facing your community. Whether it be guiding your charitable giving or inspiring you to learn more about a local initiative or organization, the Foundation is here to help you make an impact.

Interested in driving change? For more information, contact London Community Foundation 519-667-1600 or info@lcf.on.ca



Covent Garden Market,
130 King Street
London ON, N6A 1C5
t. 519 667 1600

e: info@lcf.on.ca
tw: @LdnCommFdn
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