



IMPACT REPORT

2025 – 2026



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cvsbrent.org.uk



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Background to CVS Brent

Key Highlights

CVS Brent exists to strengthen, champion, and connect the borough's voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. CVS Brent got going in 2012 after a year of campaigning, planning, and fundraising, with Tessa Awe serving as its first CEO and Danny as its first Chair. For fourteen years, it has supported community groups, grassroots organisations, and local charities to build the skills, resources, and confidence needed to thrive. Working in one of London Borough of Brent's most diverse boroughs, the organisation has continually adapted to changing social and economic conditions while maintaining a clear focus on community empowerment and sector resilience. Its core work centres on capacity building, offering tailored support such as governance development, funding advice, organisational health checks, and partnership brokering to help groups deliver sustainable, high-quality services.

Alongside this practical support, CVS Brent plays a vital role as a connector and advocate. It links VCSE organisations with statutory partners, funders, and each other, helping to foster collaboration and shared learning across the sector. The organisation also ensures that the voices of local communities are represented in decision-making spaces through engagement in borough-wide boards and thematic networks. This advocacy is increasingly important as organisations face growing demand, financial constraints, and pressure to demonstrate impact in a competitive funding environment.

In recent years, CVS Brent has helped the sector navigate significant challenges, including the lasting effects of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and changes in commissioning. Its response has focused on providing practical and accessible support, enabling organisations to stabilise, adapt, and innovate—whether through digital development, collaborative working, or leadership transitions. Grounded in a commitment to equity and inclusion, CVS Brent continues to invest in diverse, community-led organisations, ensuring the sector remains resilient, representative, and able to meet complex local needs while working in partnership to shape its future.



CVS Brent Team

Staff

Dean LOUGHRAN
Accounts

Erim METTO
Chief Executive
Officer

Ibrahim ANSARI
Operations
Manager

Liam CHIPSHAM
Development
Officer

Maaha SULEIMAN
Funding Officer

Marika MASON
Heritage Lead

Sarah OYADALE
Capacity Building
Officer

Patrick BURROW
Wellbeing Officer

Dunstanete KUTI
Third Sector Accounts
Consultant

Tina MAUGHAN
Administrative Support

Trustees for the period to 31 March 2026

Christopher Ronald Murray
Chairperson

Mahendra Negi
Treasurer

Emad Al-Ebadi

Norma Hoyte

Sandra Kabir

Rajesh Makwana BEM

Sally Kirkwood
Associate



CEO Report



Erim Metto

In February 2025, I stepped into the role of Chief Executive Officer at CVS Brent following a period characterised by significant uncertainty, two consecutive years of financial losses, post-pandemic pressures facing the voluntary sector, and a noticeable decline in stakeholders confidence in the organisation.

One year on, I am pleased to report that CVS Brent has returned to a surplus position (£16,596, Management Accounts), it has regained a clear and purposeful strategic direction. Our relationships with stakeholders have been rebuilt and strengthened, and those who have worked as part of the CVS Brent continue to demonstrate exceptional commitment, professionalism, and dedication to the communities we serve.

Early in my tenure, decisions were taken to complete a comprehensive organisational strategic review. This review acknowledged and celebrated the many strengths that have defined CVS Brent's long-standing contribution to the borough, while also addressing the challenges that had accumulated over recent years: diminishing reserves, the absence of a surplus for two consecutive financial years, governance arrangements no longer fit for purpose, a loss of confidence from key partners, and the lack of a coherent organisational vision.

Our strategic review was concluded in December 2025. It assessed our starting point, the current and emerging needs of the sector, and the most effective way to ensure that Brent's voluntary and community organisations continue to thrive. As a result, we have taken difficult but necessary decisions in the best interests of the sector. CVS Brent will move towards closure, supporting the establishment of a newly branded body that will carry forward the strengths and legacy of CVS Brent while introducing modern governance, transparency, accessibility, cross sector partnerships and renewed leadership for the future.

I extend my sincere thanks to our trustees for their tireless commitment, to our staff for their resilience and dedication, to our stakeholder, particularly the London Borough of Brent, for their continued partnership, to our volunteers for their generosity, and to Brent's remarkable third sector, which continues to serve our diverse communities with unwavering compassion and excellence.



Chair's Report



Chris Murray

This past year has been one of the most challenging and defining periods for CVS Brent, but also one that has demonstrated the resilience, integrity and enduring value of local voluntary sector infrastructure. Throughout a complex period of change, the Board has remained focused on our core purpose: supporting a strong, connected and representative voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Brent.

We have continued to steward the organisation through a period of transition with care and transparency, recognising that uncertainty can be unsettling for the organisations we serve. While the long-term future of CVS Brent continues to take shape, our commitment to an orderly, sector-centred transition has remained constant. We are actively engaging with emerging proposals and working constructively with partners—including the local authority—to ensure continuity, stability and a strong sector voice, whatever form future infrastructure arrangements take.

Financially, the organisation has not been immune to the pressures facing local infrastructure bodies nationally. CVS Brent recorded deficits in 2023–2024 (–£89,820) and 2024–2025 (–£139,340), reflecting tightening funding conditions and rising operational demands. Importantly, this year's management accounts now project a modest surplus of approximately £16,596. This improvement reflects strengthened financial controls, disciplined decision-making, and the collective commitment of trustees and staff to stabilise the organisation during a period of uncertainty.

I want to express my sincere thanks to our trustees, members and staff, whose professionalism, resilience and integrity have ensured that CVS Brent continues to deliver high-quality support, training, partnership development and sector representation. I would also like to thank our CEO for his leadership in charting a viable way forward—engaging openly with partners and ensuring that decisions are grounded in evidence, legal clarity and the long-term interests of the sector.

As we look ahead to 2026–2027, our focus remains on responsible stewardship, transparency and collaboration. We remain committed to supporting a strong, inclusive and confident VCSE ecosystem in Brent and to working with members, partners and any new body that emerges to ensure the sector continues to be well supported, well represented and well heard.

Strategic Review

In June 2025, the Trustees of CVS Brent commissioned an independent Strategic Review to assess the organisation's position, performance, and future role within Brent's voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. The review, awarded to Red Everywhere Consulting following a competitive tender process, was completed in December 2025. It provided a clear, evidence-based assessment of CVS Brent's operating environment, governance, financial resilience, and strategic positioning, taking into account years of sector change, financial pressure, and evolving commissioning expectations. Extensive stakeholder engagement highlighted both the organisation's historic contribution and key challenges, including financial fragility, inconsistent engagement with smaller and Global Majority-led groups, and limited influence in emerging system-wide agendas.

The findings also made clear that the existing organisational model—designed for a previous funding landscape—could not be sustainably adapted without significant risk. In response, Trustees made a forward-looking decision to prioritise the long-term needs of Brent's VCSE sector by supporting the development of a new, modern entity built for today's commissioning, partnership, and accountability requirements. This process was informed by wide-ranging engagement, including over 120 organisations, in-depth interviews, round tables, surveys, and detailed analysis of governance, financial systems, and sector feedback. CVS Brent is now working with partners to support the transition towards this new body, with further developments expected in the coming months.

CVS Brent will work with partners towards the development of a new body over the next few months.

- Over 15 in-depth one-to-one interviews with trustees, staff, Brent Council leaders and officers, funders and key sector partners
- Five round table conversations with key partners, funders and key stakeholders
- A partner perception survey (October 2025) with 65 responses from local VCSE organisations
- 120 separate bodies engaged
- 8 round table meeting with stakeholder from various sectors
- One to one meets with staff, trustees, members, funders and stakeholder
- Attendance at the Brent Together Partnership Workshop, engaging with 40 partner organisations
- A staff and core team survey with 8 responses
- Review of financial accounts, governance documentation and board papers
- Analysis of grant tracking systems, funding pipelines and monitoring processes



Marcus Isman-Egal
Managing Partner



Graeme Dixon
Senior Associate Consultant

Development

Liam Cliphsham



Since August 2025, my work at CVS Brent has focused on building local organisational capacity, driving community initiatives, and securing funding for partnership work across the borough.

A priority has been supporting our members to better understand and utilise emerging technology. I developed and delivered targeted AI training on funding-bid writing and reporting. Alongside this, I facilitated charitable governance training, ensuring local residents understand the different registrations and structures available to deliver community work and are equipped with the knowledge required for compliance, sustainability, and effective board management

In terms of grassroots infrastructure, I provided dedicated, ongoing support to the Wembley Central Lottery Big Local project, specifically aiding the development and strategic direction of 'The Big Green Hub' which is a new community space in King Edward VII Park. Additionally, I committed significant time and structural support to the Brent Resilience Hub Project, helping to foster a more robust safety net and support system for Brent residents.

Looking ahead, I am pleased to report successful collaborative fundraising efforts that will directly benefit the borough. We have successfully secured funding for two key partnership projects rolling out over the next year: a cross-borough road-safety campaign aimed at reducing incidents and promoting active travel, and an engaging youth music project designed to empower Brent's young people through creative expression and skill-building.

Funding

Maaha Suleiman



Over the past eight months, I have supported CVS Brent's funding opportunities and contributed to the delivery of several CVS Brent projects, with a primary focus on fundraising and advancing the Brent Resilience Hub in partnership with Brent Council.

My main responsibility has been leading fundraising efforts to secure the delivery and long-term sustainability of the Brent Resilience Hub toolkit, a borough-wide resource designed to strengthen community preparedness and emergency response. Alongside this, I have supported the project's development from concept through to implementation, ensuring it remains aligned with community needs and priorities.

To date, we have secured approximately £70,000, with several additional applications pending decision. This reflects a strategic and increasingly successful approach to investment and sustainability for the programme. Over the past six months, we have submitted 56 funding applications across CVS Brent initiatives and wider partnership projects.

In addition, I recently facilitated a leadership workshop for women through Equi-Vision, focusing on confidence-building, leadership development, peer learning, and supporting women to navigate the VCSE sector with greater confidence and clarity.

More broadly, I have contributed to partnership development across the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector, helping to strengthen collaboration and expand access to opportunities for organisations across Brent. Overall, my work has centred on securing funding, supporting programme development, and contributing to initiatives that build community resilience and strengthen sector capacity across the borough.

REN Project

Impact and Progress

The Research Engagement Network (REN) project in Brent is an initiative aimed at increasing diversity, inclusion, and participation in health and care research. It works specifically with underrepresented communities to address health inequalities.

Over the past 12 months we have delivered two events with a focus on prostate cancer with over 100 attendees across both events

REN Community Champions:

The project offered free training for community champions, who then help to promote health and care research in their communities and conduct workshops.



Patrick Burrow

Big Green Hub



Elsa Caleb

Wembley Central Big Local is a resident-led community partnership in Brent, London, dedicated to improving local wellbeing and everyday life. Funded by the National Lottery, it focuses on connecting neighbours, reducing social isolation, and enhancing the local environment through practical, community-driven initiatives.

The partnership — often known locally as Wembley Futures — is made up of residents who collectively decide priorities for the area and shape the projects delivered.

Its activities have included community allotments, weekly coffee mornings, walking groups, arts and crafts sessions, family fundays, and previously the Big Green Social Action Hub, all designed to bring people together and strengthen community ties.

CVS Brent has since October 2025, provided the hub with funding support, a complete review of its services, helping facilitate change, recognising new opportunities, developing contacts within the local authority, health authority, the third sector and private sector.



Funders Fair 2026

The Brent Funders Fair 2026 continued to play a vital role in strengthening the borough's voluntary and community sector by connecting local organisations with key funders and emerging funding opportunities. Held in partnership with CVS Brent, the event provided a focused platform for two practical workshops and enabled 15 funders to host dedicated advice stalls, offering direct guidance on funding priorities, application processes, and partnership expectations.

The Fair created an accessible space for community groups to build relationships, understand funder priorities, and gain practical insight into social value, collaboration, and funding readiness. This support is particularly important for smaller and emerging organisations that often face barriers when navigating complex funding landscapes.

Building on the momentum of the 2025 Funders Fair, the 2026 event successfully convened 15 major funders, delivered two high-engagement workshops, and welcomed over 200 participants from across Brent's voluntary and community sector. The Fair continues to level the playing field, strengthen local capacity, and ensure that Brent organisations are well-positioned to secure resources and deliver meaningful impact for the borough's diverse communities.



VCSE Cross-Sector Initiative

On 30 September 2025, CVS Brent and Brent Council brought together nearly 100 partners from across the borough to strengthen collaboration with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector. The event, held at Brent Civic Centre, was led through the Cross-Sector VCSE Steering Group, co-chaired by CVS Brent and the council.

Partners developed a shared vision for closer working between the VCSE sector, health services, businesses and the council. Discussions focused on collective commitments, Social Value opportunities and new ways to connect local suppliers with community initiatives.

Using a World Café format, attendees explored priorities including leadership, volunteering, collaboration and funding. The outcomes are now shaping a new VCSE Action Plan, refreshed grants programme and future capacity-building supported for the sector.



Brent Resilience Tool-Kit

CVS Brent has led the creation of a new Community Resilience Toolkit, designed to help residents, community groups, and voluntary organisations strengthen their ability to prepare for and respond to local emergencies. The toolkit brings together practical guidance, local resources, and clear steps that support communities facing challenges such as flooding, severe weather, anti-social behaviour, safeguarding concerns, and disruptions to essential services.

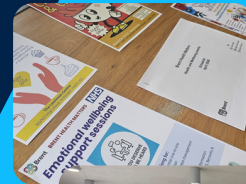
The toolkit is open to all Brent residents and voluntary and community sector organisations. Its launch session will be informal, interactive, and accessible to anyone interested in building safer, more connected neighbourhoods.

Developed over six months, the toolkit was shaped through close collaboration between CVS Brent, Brent's voluntary and community sector, the Greater London Authority, and several partner CVS organisations across London. This partnership ensured that the content reflects real community needs, local expertise, and the lived experience of frontline groups. The toolkit was formally launched in April 2026.

The resource aligns with the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and sits within the governance of the Brent Resilience Forum, a partnership between emergency services, the council, health partners, and community organisations. It focuses on non-malicious hazards such as heatwaves, flooding, power outages, and infrastructure failures.

Key sections include risk identification, community planning, asset mapping, and action planning, alongside guidance on climate adaptation, safeguarding, and community health. The toolkit also signposts grant funding, training opportunities, and specialist resources such as the National Youth Agency resilience toolkit for young people aged 10+.

The Brent Community Resilience Toolkit offers practical, accessible support for anyone committed to strengthening resilience across the borough. Website link <https://brentresiliencehub.co.uk>.



London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC)

The London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) continues to cement its role as the capital's leading connector for voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. As the strategic umbrella body for more than 120,000 groups, LVSC drives collaboration, amplifies community voice, and ensures London's diverse communities are represented in policy and practice.

This year, LVSC's pan-London networks—spanning employment, health, and community safety—have grown in influence and reach. The Employment and Skills Network (LESPN) now supports nearly 900 organisations shaping fairer access to work. Community Voices for Health has surpassed 1,200 members championing equitable health outcomes. The Safer Future Communities Network continues to unite organisations committed to justice, prevention, and safer neighbourhoods.

CVS Brent has played a vital role within this ecosystem, contributing local intelligence, sector leadership, and community-rooted expertise. As one of London's most active borough-level infrastructure bodies, CVS Brent has strengthened the bridge between grassroots groups and citywide strategy. Through joint policy work, shared learning, and coordinated capacity-building, CVS Brent has helped ensure that Brent's communities, among the most diverse in the UK, are fully represented in London-wide decision-making. Over the year around 18 meetings were attended to drive forward community cohesion.

Together, LVSC and partners like CVS Brent are shaping a fairer, more resilient capital grounded in community power and collaborative leadership.



CORE Contract

CVS Brent's Core Contract with Brent Council has delivered exceptional impact this year, significantly exceeding expectations across every major performance area. To date, CVS Brent has supported over 300 organisations, far surpassing the annual target of 180 and demonstrating the scale of demand for high-quality infrastructure support in the borough.

Attendance at online training has also grown, with an average of 32 organisations per session, up from 27 the previous year—clear evidence that the sector continues to rely on CVS Brent for accessible, relevant, capacity-building opportunities. Despite reducing one-to-one support sessions from twice weekly to once weekly, CVS Brent still met its annual KPI for one-to-ones within the first quarter alone, supporting 50 different organisations. Recognising the importance of this service to the sector, CVS Brent continued to deliver weekly sessions throughout the year, even when this required operating over budget, ensuring that organisations did not experience a reduction in support.

Alongside these core services, CVS Brent has strengthened the local voluntary and community sector ecosystem through new and enhanced communication and information-sharing platforms. The introduction of the monthly Funding Bulletin Board has become a valued resource, highlighting funding opportunities that are often difficult for smaller organisations to find independently. The CVS Brent newsletter now reaches 800+ organisations and nearly 2,000 individuals, providing a vital channel for voluntary sector groups and statutory partners to promote services, advertise jobs and volunteering roles, and stay informed about developments across Brent. These achievements reflect a year of sustained commitment, strategic responsiveness, and sector leadership, ensuring that Brent's voluntary and community organisations are better connected, better informed, and better equipped to serve local residents.



Ibrahim Ansari
Operations Manager



Sarah Oyedele
Legal Structures
Consultant

Consultants
Dunstanette Kuti
Chantal Cornelius
William Buist



2025 – 2026

- 354 one-to-ones delivered
- 320 organisations supported
- £261,000 raised for organisations

2024– 2025

- 333 one-to-ones delivered
- 313 organisations supported
- £190,000 raised for organisations



Prashant Patel
Communications Officer

Prashant oversees all digital communications, ensuring the website remains current, newsletters stay engaging, and social media channels are consistently relevant, and on point.

Grants

Grants – Delivery Summary

Over the past 12 months, CVS Brent has played a central role in supporting a wide range of local and borough-wide funding programmes. Our contribution has combined training delivery, funder advisory work, portal access support, and participation on assessment panels to strengthen transparency, accountability, and fair decision-making across the sector. Funds supported included.

- Love Where You Live (LWYL)
- Brent Health Matters (BHM) Community Fund
- Edward Harvist Trust Fund
- Investing in Brent Programme
- Wembley Stadium Foundation (WSF)
- Wates Community Chest
- Edward Harvist (duplicate reference retained for accuracy if needed)

Across these programmes, our role has included: Delivering capacity-building training for applicants, advising funders on community needs and sector intelligence, Supporting organisations with portal navigation and application readiness, Sitting on assessment and interview panels to ensure fairness and transparency.

Commissioned Programme Delivery – Vistry Community Chest (South Kilburn). In addition to borough-wide funds, CVS Brent was commissioned by Vistry to manage the South Kilburn Community Chest. We were able to oversee the delivery of 9 local community projects, distributing over £58,000 in grant funding, provided hands-on support to ensure projects were compliant, impactful, and community-led. We anticipate a similar level of investment in May 2026, with CVS Brent positioned to continue managing the programme and strengthening local delivery outcomes.

Social Value

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

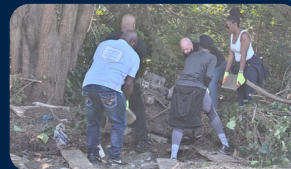
In alignment with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy action plan, we will ensure that parks and green spaces offer increased opportunities for accessible physical activity and exercise. To support this, we have delivered in-person activities across the borough's parks and green spaces. These events are designed to encourage physical activity, strengthen community engagement, and promote environmental wellbeing—particularly among hard-to-reach communities.

Prosperity and Stability

As part of our commitment to fostering prosperity and stability in the borough, we will deliver targeted CV Clinics throughout the contract period. These clinics will support residents—particularly BME young people from Brent—to enhance their employability and access higher-paid roles in growth sectors such as technology and green industries.

Thriving Communities

We will provide residents with opportunities to access senior leadership roles within the community through dedicated initiatives and structured shadowing opportunities.



We Wear Heritage

Strengthening Identity and Pride

Participants reported increased pride in their cultural heritage and a deeper understanding of the significance of traditional attire. Many described the project as the first time their garments had been recognised as heritage assets worthy of preservation.

Intergenerational Connection

Oral history sessions created meaningful exchanges between elders and young people. Elders shared memories of migration, craftsmanship, and cultural rituals, while young people documented these stories using digital tools and creative methods.

Increased Participation in Heritage

Many participants had never engaged with heritage projects before. By working through trusted community groups and using creative, accessible methods, WWH enabled under-represented communities to become active contributors to Brent's cultural record.

Skills Development and Capacity Building

Community groups and volunteers gained practical skills in oral history, documentation, research, and event curation. Several groups expressed interest in continuing heritage work independently, demonstrating sustainable impact.

Contribution to Brent Archives

The project produced a significant body of new heritage material—oral histories, garment photography, community research, and exhibition content—now shared with Brent Archives to ensure long-term public access.

Aims Achieved

WWH successfully:

- Improved access to and representation within local heritage
- Highlighted the role of traditional costume in identity, memory, and belonging
- Increased pride, confidence, and participation among under-served communities
- Preserved endangered heritage through elders' oral histories
- Supported community groups to document and share their heritage
- Equipped voluntary groups with heritage skills, including oral history

Legacy

We Wear Heritage leaves a lasting legacy of strengthened community pride, enriched borough archives, and increased capacity for community-led heritage work. The project demonstrated the power of traditional attire to connect generations, celebrate diversity, and ensure that Brent's cultural stories are preserved for the future.



We Wear Heritage

We Wear Heritage (WWH) celebrated the traditional attire of Brent's diverse communities, recognising clothing as a powerful expression of identity, memory, and belonging. Brent is one of London's most ethnically diverse boroughs, home to significant Caribbean, Indian sub-continent, East African Asian, Jewish, and Irish communities. Their traditional garments—richly patterned, carefully crafted, and often handmade—act as 'living history books', carrying stories of migration, resilience, craftsmanship, and cultural continuity. The project set out to ensure these stories were recognised, preserved, and shared for future generations.



Marika Mason
Heritage Project Coordinator

Project Delivery

WWH supported 12 community groups across Brent to explore heritage stories, develop new skills, and share their traditions through public events and exhibitions. Activities included:

- Intergenerational storytelling and heritage workshops
- Oral history interviews with elders
- Costume documentation and photography
- Creative sessions for children, young people, families, and older residents
- A London Fashion Week-aligned cultural showcase
- Community-led exhibitions and public events

A team of pupil and university volunteers was trained in oral history, translation, event planning, and archival research. Their contributions strengthened the project while building their confidence and employability. The programme built on CVS Brent's established strengths in community development and partnership working.

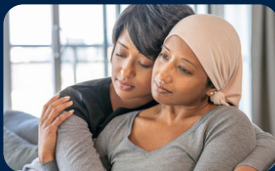


Macmillan

Macmillan Community Cancer Care Project

CVS Brent, supported by Macmillan Cancer Support, delivered the Community Cancer Care Project to improve access to cancer information and services across one of London's most diverse boroughs. Through a network of 40 locally recruited Community Champions, the project has reached 3,643 residents, building trust and improving understanding of cancer prevention, early diagnosis and access to care.

The project delivered 600 health checks through community-based initiatives and engaged over 2,347 radio listeners through cancer awareness discussions led by survivors. By using culturally relevant, community-led approaches, the project has strengthened engagement with health services and helped tackle health inequalities across Brent.



Back To Health

The Back to Health project was a volunteer-led initiative designed to support Brent residents on NHS waiting lists by improving communication, identifying barriers to attending appointments, and helping patients stay engaged with their care while waiting for treatment. Delivered in partnership with local health and community organisations, the project aimed to reduce avoidable delays and strengthen the connection between patients and hospital services.

During its delivery period, the project operated at significant scale, with volunteers successfully contacting more than 4,000 patients and expanding the service from supporting a single specialty to five. Activity reached its highest point in March, when 1,450 calls were attempted and 869 resulted in successful patient contact. Throughout the project, volunteers played an important role in helping patients navigate appointment information and ensuring that issues affecting attendance were identified early.

Volunteer engagement remained consistently strong, with participants reporting high levels of satisfaction and a clear sense that their contribution had a positive impact on both themselves and the wider community. Their work generated meaningful operational benefits: over the course of the project, volunteers identified 423 patients who were unable to attend their scheduled appointment, including 79 whose appointment was no longer needed and 344 who still required care but could not attend at the planned time. By flagging these cases proactively, the project supported more efficient use of clinical capacity and helped reduce avoidable delays for patients waiting for treatment.

Sound Routes

Bridging Communities Through Music

We successfully secured a grant to launch 'Sound Routes: Bridging Communities Through Music'. This project is backed by funding from Youth Music thanks to the National Lottery via Arts Council England. Operating as a Trailblazer pilot, this 18-month outreach programme provides a culturally sensitive environment for making and learning music. It is specifically designed to support children and young people aged 6-25 who face compounding barriers, such as economic deprivation, English as an additional language, or refugee and asylum seeker status.

Partnering with trusted local grassroots organisation, who are outside of the typical youth sector but still engaging children and young people—the project aims to reach 160 participants, with 80 core regular attendees. A dedicated Youth Music Steering Group will co-design the programme to reflect the participants' non-Western musical traditions. Through weekly group tuition sessions, targeted one-to-one sessions, and innovative technology workshops focusing on digital recording and editing, this innovative funding enables us to empower vulnerable young residents with practical skills and deep community connections.



Brent Streets Safe Initiative

This year, we also achieved a significant milestone by securing national funding from the Road Safety Trust to run 'Brent Streets Safe'. Over its 18-month duration, this vital project aims to drastically improve road safety awareness and mitigate risks for vulnerable road users—particularly pedestrians and cyclists—within Brent's new-arrival communities.

To ensure maximum impact and cultural relevance, we are co-designing an educational toolkit alongside 12 local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) groups, with technical validation from the Brent Council Highways Team. The funding will allow us to design, print, and distribute high-quality information packs translated into the six most commonly spoken non-English languages in the borough. Through a rolling programme of 30 interactive, multi-lingual community workshops, the project will train approximately 400 vulnerable road users on UK road laws. Ultimately, the data collected throughout this initiative will inform a Final Impact Report and a Policy Briefing to be presented to the Brent Council Highways Committee, ensuring our findings leave a lasting legacy on local road safety policy.



CVS Brent Financial Position



Dean Loughran
Finance Officer

CVS Brent has operated through a sustained period of financial and organisational transition, shaped by long-term reductions in central government funding to local authorities and, in turn to, the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. In London, these challenges have been especially pronounced due to high demand for statutory services and rising inflation, which have limited available resources for discretionary and preventative spending, including support for VCSE infrastructure.

At a local level, Brent Council has implemented over £220 million in spending reductions since 2010 and continues to face significant structural financial pressures. Recent budget cycles have identified the need for additional annual savings of between £8 million and £16 million, with the Council warning that its financial position remains highly precarious. Increasing costs related to homelessness and social care, alongside reduced funding, have constrained the Council's ability to sustain previous levels of grant and contract funding to voluntary sector organisations.

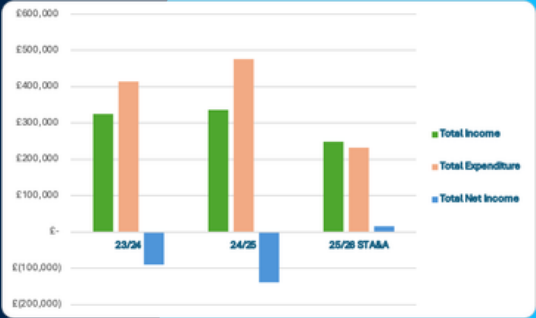
As a result, CVS Brent has experienced a steady decline in core income from grants and contracts in recent years. These reductions occurred more rapidly than the organisation could adjust its cost base, particularly in relation to fixed overheads and legacy structures. Consequently, operating deficits were recorded over the last two financial years. These difficulties have been compounded by a wider economic climate marked by high inflation, the cost of living crisis, and intensified competition for diminishing public and charitable funding. Nationally, local authority grants to VCSE organisations have decreased, with an estimated 10% reduction in grant numbers in 2023/24 and significantly deeper cuts in areas under the greatest financial strain.

In response to these challenges, CVS Brent undertook a comprehensive strategic and operational review. This process involved refocusing services, prioritising financially sustainable activities, and implementing an accelerated restructuring programme to better align costs with the current funding environment. As a result, the organisation has significantly reduced its underlying deficit. In the most recent financial year subject to audit and adjustment, the operating loss has been substantially mitigated, demonstrating the impact of decisive management action and early signs of improved financial control and resilience.

CVS Brent Financial Position

The below chart details Income and expenditure highlights from the last two audited financial years alongside provisional figures for the current financial auditing period which is April 2025 to March 2026.

FY Year	Total Income	Total Expenditure	Total Net Income
23/24	£ 324,340	£ 414,160	-£ 89,820
24/25	£ 337,070	£ 476,335	-£ 139,265
25/26 STA&A	£ 248,946	£ 232,350	£ 16,596



CVS Brent continues to operate in a highly constrained and uncertain funding environment. Ongoing real-terms pressure on central and local government finances—particularly within Brent—creates a sustained risk of reduced, retendered or short-term funding for non-statutory and VCSE infrastructure services. This risk is compounded by intensified competition for a shrinking pool of public and charitable funding, alongside continued inflationary pressures on staffing, premises and operating costs that are unlikely to be fully offset by funding uplifts.

While recent actions have significantly strengthened financial control and reduced underlying losses, the organisation remains exposed to income volatility and short/medium-term cash-flow risk should funding profiles change unexpectedly. Maintaining financial resilience will therefore depend on continued cost discipline, careful alignment of activity to funded delivery, diversification of income streams, and robust in-year monitoring and scenario planning.

Testimonials

"Well done team at CVS Brent, our London wide strategy benefits with you part of it"
Deputy Mayor Mete Coban MBE

"The work they do is vital in helping grassroots organisations thrive, connect and grow."
WISE

"Their dedicated support has been invaluable in helping us progress and grow our organisation's mission."
RVF Academy

"They play a key role in strengthening communities and supporting organisations across Brent."
Serene One

"CVS Brent is an integral part of our community's support system, helping to build a better, more connected, and more resilient Brent."
Sir Mark Rowley Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police

"CVS Brent doesn't just offer support — they empower organisations and help turn ideas into action."
The Big Green Hub

"Their insights and practical support have made our work stronger, more relevant and rooted in the community."
Civitas

"CVS Brent has been integral in enabling constructive, productive relationships with community groups."
The National Lottery Community Fund

"Expressed immense gratitude to CVS Brent for all the support that is being given to Brents vibrant third sector."
Dawn Butler MP

"A huge thank you to CVS Brent for leading on the delivery of our South Kilburn Community Chest Grant. Your professionalism, attention to detail, and consistent support were integral to Vistry's ability to deliver meaningful outcomes for the residents of South Kilburn."
Donna Kelly Vistry

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Making Roads Safer

cvs Brent



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