

# Thriving Communities Strategy 2024-2028

A BOROUGH-WIDE APPROACH TO ENCOURAGING  
SOCIAL ACTION AND ENABLING CIVIL SOCIETY



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# A BOUGH WIDE APPROACH TO ENCOURAGING SOCIAL ACTION AND ENABLING CIVIL SOCIETY

## FOREWORD

**Civil society is important. It brings people together, creates a sense of meaning and belonging, campaigns to solve pressing problems, and reduces social inequality by providing services particularly to those who are vulnerable or marginalised.**

The Council, public sector partners, businesses, residents; we all have an interest in ensuring that civil society is vibrant, resilient and as impactful as possible.

During the pandemic, we saw civil society and communities come together to be powerful forces for good. The Council developed a different, closer relationship with communities and groups based on shared goals.

This 2024-2028 Thriving Communities Strategy is an articulation of this new relationship and a commitment to continuing to support communities, civil society and local voluntary sector. It is ambitious in its vision and demands that we work collectively across different organisations and sectors to enable, facilitate and support active citizens and a vibrant VCSE sector.

We face a difficult period, the social and economic effects of the pandemic are still being felt, we have higher rates of inflation, a slowing economy, increasing health inequalities, a cost-of-living crisis and forecasts of continued austerity. The pressures on residents and on groups is immense.

This strategy will help us work together to address some of these challenges as well as realise our commitments and ambitions set out in our Corporate Plan and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: A Fairer, More Equal Hounslow.

The Council has a unique mandate as a 'leader of place' to connect and convene support for communities; this is why we have led a localities model bringing services closer to communities through Community and Family Hubs and committed to a community wealth building approach. We offer support so that civil society can make empowered and informed decisions on how it organises to achieve the best outcomes. This can be either with Council support or independent of it. Indeed, we also value the role that civil society plays in holding the Council to account.

This strategy is an ambitious commitment to civil society and working with partners in the public and private sector to enable and support the actions of individuals and groups. It is a continuation of our previous thriving communities strategies but pushes harder for whole system support for the actions of individuals and groups that make communities healthy, safe, greener, cohesive, equitable and inclusive.



**Cllr Shantanu Rajawat**  
Leader of the Council



**Cllr Ajmer Grewal**  
Cabinet Member for  
Residents Support,  
Communities and Equalities



**Cllr Shivraj Grewal**  
Cabinet Member for  
Infrastructure, Recycling  
and Transformation

## INTRODUCTION

**Our vision** is of a thriving Hounslow where residents are proud and active in their communities, they are supported by a vibrant, diverse, voluntary sector with relationships and connections to each other and public and private organisations in the borough.

**Our context is challenging**, Covid, the cost of living and larger macro-economic pressures means that the next four years may be a struggle for many residents, businesses and organisations. In Hounslow, we see lower than average wages than the rest of London, difference in income distribution, lack of affordable housing and continued average health outcome metrics. However, our borough has better school results than most populations. There is lower than average crime levels. Our population is very diverse and incredibly resilient. Our Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector faces challenges around the cost of living impacting their finances while also increasing demand for their services. But they too, have shown their resilience, adaptability and perseverance.

**This, the third Thriving Communities Strategy**, builds on previous strategies but acknowledges that, within this challenging context, we need a whole-Hounslow, whole-system approach to supporting civil society and the voluntary sector. In our Corporate Plan, we committed to developing a deeper, more trusting relationship with communities. We want to change the way we work, including our systems, services and processes to enable social action, the voluntary sector and our relationships with each other.

**Residents and communities** are not passive recipients of this strategy, their views have shaped this document and their actions are the subject of this work.

**Our strategy has been developed** based on a series of in person and online engagement with residents, children, young people, volunteers, VCSE organisations, faith groups, businesses, Councillors and public sector partners using a variety of different methodologies to include a wide range of interested stakeholders and groups.

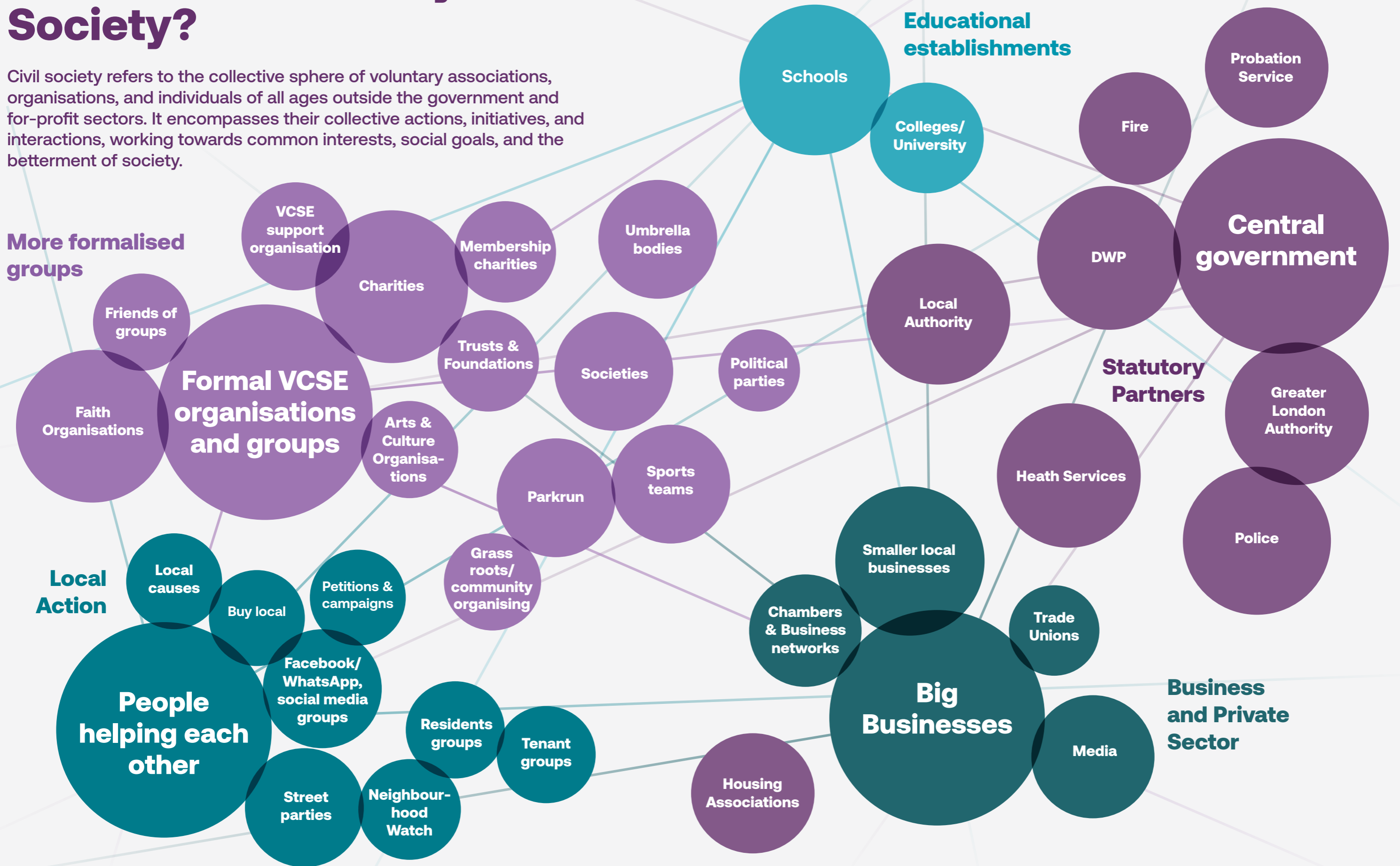
**This document was created by the Council and is supported by our partners** who commit to the principles and want to facilitate, enable and support civil society and build relationships across the system. Civil society is important for all public sector partners, it helps us realise our shared priorities - from economic growth, to safety, health, wellbeing, employment, well-rounded children, net zero, the green transition and address inequalities. We will use the next four years to develop relationship with other partners as this approach becomes "the way we do things around here".

**Alongside our suite of strategic documents and our Ambitious for Hounslow Delivery Plan**, this is a high-level strategy guiding the work and activities of teams across the Council. This strategy is not an end in itself. It is the start of an ambitious four-year journey with partners. While some partners are already in agreement and committed to working together, there are opportunities to do more, or do it better. There are still others we want to engage and work with over the next four years.

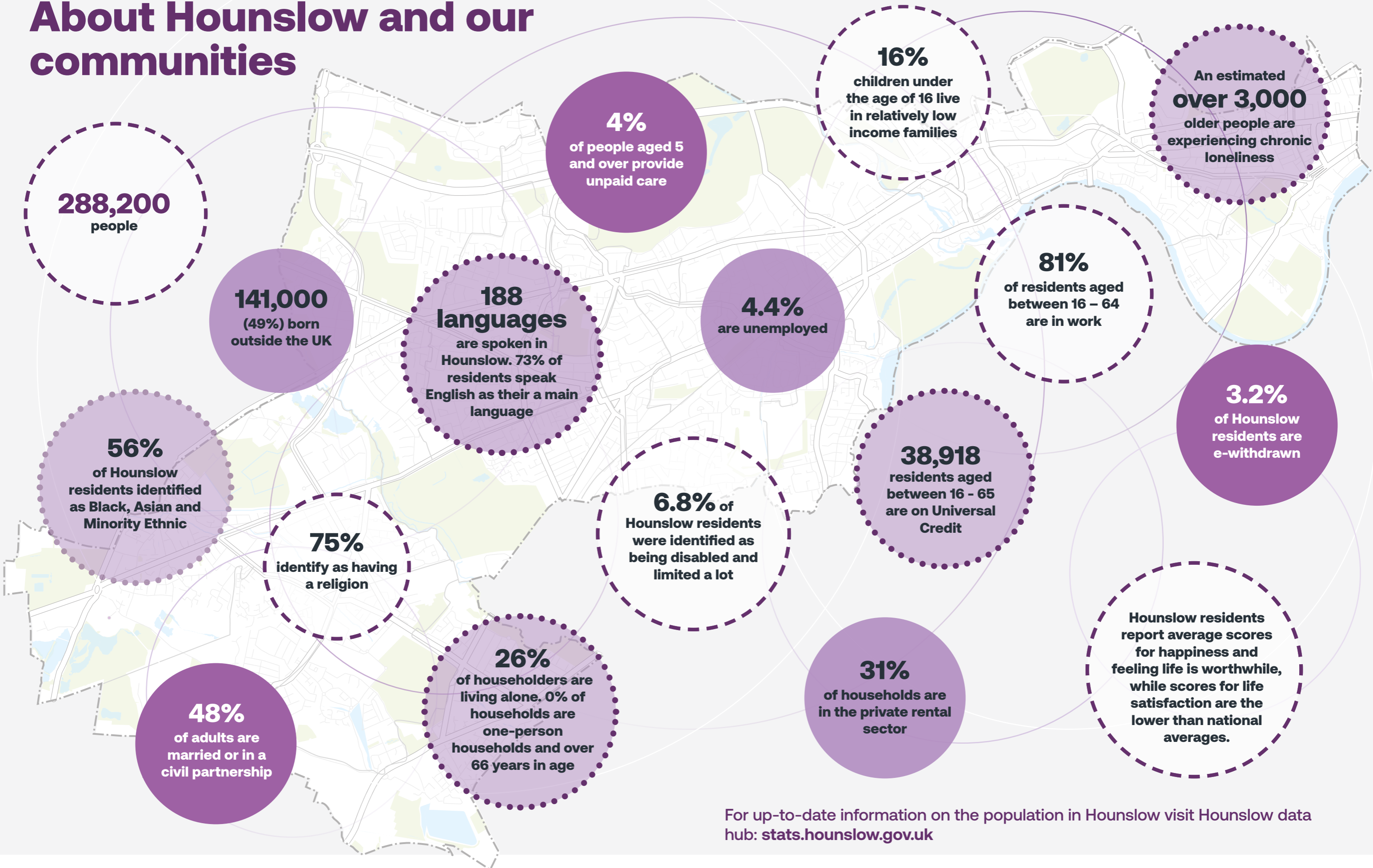


# What do we mean by Civil Society?

Civil society refers to the collective sphere of voluntary associations, organisations, and individuals of all ages outside the government and for-profit sectors. It encompasses their collective actions, initiatives, and interactions, working towards common interests, social goals, and the betterment of society.



# About Hounslow and our communities



For up-to-date information on the population in Hounslow visit Hounslow data hub: [stats.hounslow.gov.uk](https://stats.hounslow.gov.uk)



# About our community assets and infrastructure



**OVER 850 VCSE ORGANISATIONS**



**62 COUNCILLORS**



**24 'FRIENDS OF' PARKS GROUPS, 9 ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATIONS, 15 PARK COMMUNITY GROUPS**



**6,824 REGISTERED VOLUNTEERS**  
and thousands more volunteering directly with organisations and faith group or carrying out informal volunteering and social action



**147 COMMUNITY CONNECTORS**



**94 ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS**



**297M – AVERAGE DISTANCE** of any resident to the closest green space



**7 ADULT AND JUNIOR PARKRUNS**



**11 LIBRARIES**



**160 SPORTS CLUBS**



**46 GPs AND 52 COMMUNITY PHARMACIES**



**19 ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE**



**5 PUBLIC HALLS**



**3 FIRE STATIONS**



**21 FOODBANKS or COMMUNITY PANTRIES**



**51 PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUPS**



**10 CHILDREN'S CENTRES**



**15,290 BUSINESSES**



**EALING and HOUNSLOW COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SERVICE**



**VOLUNTEER BROKERAGE SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERING FORUM**



**140 FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS**



**77 SCHOOLS**



# Summary of Strategy

To embed a borough wide approach to encouraging social action and enabling civil society, this strategy is based around three pillars - **People, Organisations and Relationships**. These pillars are based on the engagement with residents, VCSE organisations, faith groups, members, officers and public sector partners.

**THRIVING COMMUNITY STRATEGY:**  
**A borough-wide approach to encouraging social action and enabling civil society**

**Our vision is of a thriving Hounslow where residents are proud and active in their communities, they are supported by a vibrant, diverse, voluntary sector with relationships and connections to each other and public and private organisations in the borough.**



**Principles of approach / Ways of working**

1. Preventative	2. Strength-based	3. Locally grounded
4. Data and insight driven	5. Iterative and Flexible	

*Enabled by a whole borough approach, with our public partners, VCSE groups and residents*

Under each of the pillars, the strategy sets out what we have learnt through the engagement and the approach to this area of the civic ecosystem. We outline a set of high-level commitments to guide the work of the Council.

Although it is helpful to think about this work in terms of discrete pillars, we know that much of the activity does not neatly fit into these areas. This structure is a means to help us work together.

It also includes a commitment from our partners to support social action and civil society and a set of statements from these partners illustrating their work as well as their ambitions.

## PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE WAYS OF WORKING

**We want residents and groups to continue to champion their own causes and build their communities. We want local VCSE organisations to act locally, connect, collaborate and empower the communities they work with. To help, we will adopt these principles to inform our ways of working:**

- 1 PREVENTATIVE**  
We are **preventative** in our thinking, taking actions early to respond to need before it gets worse. We want residents to do the same. We want them to be healthier and independent for longer, live in safer neighbourhoods and deal with local issues before they are referred to statutory services. In taking responsibility for themselves - and their homes, neighbourhoods and communities - residents exercise social action.
- 2 STRENGTH-BASED**  
We have adopted a **community development strength-based approach** where we work with residents and communities, recognise local strengths, communities' wealth and assets. In this way, we empower residents to respond to local issues and build off their own and their community's strengths.
- 3 LOCALLY GROUNDED**  
Services will be arranged at a neighbourhood level, so they make sense to local people and are responsive to local needs. We have adopted a **locality approach** in the form of community and family hubs in which Council, partners and VCSE services and activities can be organised and accessible, close to home and working in partnership with others.
- 4 DATA AND INSIGHT DRIVEN**  
We make our decisions, allocate funding and implement programmes based on **insight, qualitative and quantitative data** from residents and groups as well as research, good practice and professional advice.
- 5 ITERATIVE AND FLEXIBLE**  
Our approach is **iterative and flexible** to respond to the changing environment and help facilitate relationships and partnership building. The Strategy will be regularly reviewed throughout its life cycle.







# Pillar 1: People active in their communities

**The borough relies on the active contribution of people to their neighbourhoods and their communities, whether these are geographical, social, interest based or workplace communities, online or offline.**

Residents help out, give back and contribute in many ways. Someone might check on an elderly neighbour, organise a street party, donate to a charity or volunteer with a local faith or community organisation.

During Covid, we saw an army of people offer to help. We were galvanised by a need to protect those most vulnerable. We know that Hounslow residents are motivated by giving back, are passionate about local causes and interests, want to build their skills and supportive networks.

We want to harness this energy. We know that social action and volunteering is good for us all. It improves health, wellbeing, reduces loneliness, builds skills and networks, creating a pathway into work, promotes community wealth building and creates a sense of pride and belonging.

But we hear that people have busy work lives, caring responsibilities or even personal health or confidence issues that means they can't always

contribute or do so through traditional volunteering roles.

We also know that people's environment also impacts their willingness to give of their time and energy. Making a place better may be a motivator for social action but an untidy, unsafe environment might dishearten some residents causing them to disconnect from their local area, exacerbating inequalities between areas.

We will celebrate all the different types of social action. We will advertise and promote where there is a need for volunteers. We will support organisations looking for volunteers and help individuals into volunteering and social action, as a pathway into work and because it's a good thing. We will also look to reduce and address some of the barriers to volunteering to make it easier for people to get involved.

**By 2028, we want local people to feel a sense of civic pride in their communities and be involved in acts of neighbourliness and online or offline social action in ways that work for them.**

## OUR COMMITMENTS

**In thinking about how we, the Council and partners, can enable, facilitate, support and, where necessary, get out of the way of local social action, we think about how we do things through our day-to-day work, as well as our role as a commissioner and deliverer of services.**

### AS AN ENABLER AND FACILITATOR OF SOCIAL ACTION, WE WILL:

- Encourage individuals or communities to **take a lead or address an issue** that is important to them and facilitate or support activities through our champion groups and small grant programmes
- Promote **volunteering** through our locality work and other touch points with communities
- Use our existing **spaces and facilities** to support residents to be involved in local social action
- Ensure new developments include **non-residential use and shared spaces** for daily interactions with neighbours and community activities
- Help people to **feel safe** when meeting in public spaces through our community safety preventative approaches



### AS A COMMISSIONER AND DELIVERER OF SERVICES, WE WILL:

- **Celebrate and promote** the work of volunteers, residents engaged in local social action, and community leaders across the borough
- Provide information on **opportunities for volunteering** through our communications channels and our networks
- Continue to commission **volunteer support services** to grow volunteering, provide a variety of different opportunities and meet the needs of local organisations and residents
- Actively support **specific groups or residents** that might need additional support or face barriers to volunteering
- Where applicable, build in volunteering, including volunteer recruitment and management into **commissioned activity**
- Continue to develop our **employer supported volunteering offer**, building a culture that supports public service and strengthens our employees' understanding of and connection to the borough
- Work with partners and local organisations to look at how to reward and incentivise **volunteering**





## Pillar 2: Vibrant, responsive VCSE organisations supporting residents

The 850 or so VCSE organisations in Hounslow differ in size, function and focus and offer a huge amount to local areas. They provide services, generate wealth, connect, engage, and empower residents, addressing local inequalities. They are local employers. They also deliver services to marginalised groups on behalf of the Council and partners to help realise our strategic priorities. In the face of increased demand for services, persistent inequalities, the often complex problems residents face, and the need to focus on prevention, we and VCSE partners need to work together to realise shared outcomes and priorities.

When we talk about VCSE organisations, we talk about the rich tapestry or ecosystem of organised (and semi-organised) civil society from resident groups to faith groups, networks and constituted charities that work in Hounslow or with residents, online or in person, in different languages and cultural contexts around common issues, interests or geographic areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the relationship between the Council, our partners and VCSE groups. This period created a new less transactional relationship based on trust and common purpose. We want to continue to develop this relationship and strengthen collaboration and partnership working.

The VCSE sector in Hounslow sector has been described by VCSE representatives as ‘vibrant, diverse, resilient and dedicated’, offering a variety of services to meet the needs of residents and providing a critical social safety net. However, they noted that the sector can be ‘fragmented, disjointed, underdeveloped’.

The sector itself aspires, by 2028 for a more ‘connected, collaborative, coordinated, integrated and networked sector, which engages and co-produces with communities and residents, is financially sustainable, resourced, resilient and adaptable and works more strategically with LBH and local public sector partners’.

We currently collaborate with many voluntary groups in the services we provide. We seek their feedback as local experts. We ask for their help in reaching residents. We work alongside them in localities and hubs or shared office spaces. We commission services from single or multiple organisations. We provide grants and offer reduced rents in Council owned buildings.

We also commission two support services for the VCSE sector – an infrastructure support service and volunteering support service. As we look to the next four years, we want this relationship to become more strategic and collaborative, allowing us to collectively deliver better outcomes for Hounslow’s residents.

### OUR COMMITMENTS

#### AS AN ENABLER AND FACILITATOR OF A VIBRANT AND RESPONSIVE VCSE SECTOR, WE WILL:

- Use a community development, strengths-based approach so we support and **promote the work of local groups** and build on the existing assets within communities (for example community leaders, local services, valued spaces, and local experience and skills)
- Make use of our **communication channels, newsletters and Hounslow Connect** to share, promote and celebrate the VCSE sector’s work, helping to increase awareness and improve access
- Review our **working practices and touchpoints** so the Council is more accessible to VCSE groups and they know how to get involved, influence decision making and share their views
- Share **data or intelligence** with the sector through the datahub, community insight reports and topic specific information sharing activities
- Ensure our **assets, facilities and spaces** can be used to support and enable the work of local community groups so access is fair, consistent and affordable for the VCSE sector and meets the needs of the local residents
- Work with partners to consider how other **commercial or public sector owned spaces can be used** by VCSE groups to enable access to quality, flexible, affordable spaces
- Encourage **networking and collaboration** between local organisations through grant-making, commissioning, service provision, equality network groups and activities at a borough and locality level

#### AS A DELIVERER OF SERVICES, COMMISSIONER AND FUNDER, WE WILL:

- Continue to develop our **voluntary sector infrastructure support service** so it meets the specific needs of Hounslow VCSE organisations
- Develop our approach to grant funding and commissioning alongside other borough partners to provide **sustainable and joined up funding models** to the voluntary sector
- Initiate our Funder’s Plus model, providing **additional support to funded organisations** beyond grant funding to build organisational resilience, for example, offering, skilled volunteering or mentorship
- Involve **VCSE organisations during relevant commissioning and procurement processes** to help inform the design of services
- Use **social value** in procurement processes to support the needs of local VCSE organisations so there are locally relevant and appropriate social value commitments, with deliverable targets







# Pillar 3: Strong and respectful relationships between communities and with partners

**Relationships within and between communities and with organisations, businesses, and government matter. This 'social capital' makes things happen. It means people feel connected to each other and to the place they live, study or work. It also helps people and organisations influence decisions by knowing when and how to engage.**

We are a diverse borough with many different communities. The relationships within communities help people develop a shared sense of belonging and pride. Communities also need to show tolerance and respect to each other. Online and offline communities may either foster tolerance or intolerance. We need to ensure they work for tolerance.

Hounslow is a welcoming borough. With high level of inward migration, asylum seekers and refugees as well as population churn and change, we want to focus on integration – supporting people to feel part of the community in which they live.

We want to enable and support relationship building so that by 2028, communities, civil society, the public sector and private sector are better

connected to each other, relationships are fostered, and partnerships are built.

This means that residents and groups can access decision-makers and decision-making processes. They are active in influencing services and structures so that they are locally relevant. This might be through social activism, lobbying, protest, engagement or representation in strategic spaces. These relationships with residents hold organisations to account but also build cooperation, tolerance and solidarity amongst diverse groups.

Councillors play an important role as community champions, foster good community relationships as well as linking residents and organisations to each other, the Council and partners. There are also a host of structures, processes and spaces developed to enable community or resident voice and representation across the Council and with public sector partners.

**We want these to work for residents and groups so they can actively shape decisions and services that affect them and in this way tackle inequalities across the borough.**

## OUR COMMITMENTS

**Within this pillar, it's helpful to think about how we can support, enable and facilitate relationships within communities, relationships through consultation and engagement and relationships with partners:**

### TO FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COMMUNITIES, WE WILL:

- **Promote, support and deliver community events, services and activities** that provide opportunities for communities to come together to celebrate the diversity of the borough, foster cohesion and enhance the sense of civic pride in Hounslow for settled and newly arrived communities
- Coordinate development activity and investment to **create public realm** that facilitates interaction, enables engagement, community pride and celebrates public art, community projects, commemoration of social, cultural, and local histories, local heroes and wider aspirations
- **Digitally connect people** without existing knowledge or access to address isolation and empower residents
- Provide a multi- dimensional **approach to protection**; safeguarding, educating and addressing online and offline intolerance and tackling radicalisation

### TO ENGAGE RESIDENTS AND GROUPS, WE WILL:

- **Engage early**, involving communities and groups in setting priorities and co-producing solutions, not just consulting on options
- Use **participatory and deliberative methods** supporting communities to act and encourage discussion and debate between stakeholders
- **Work with existing networks** identifying local community assets, VCSE organisations and spaces to enable engagement and collaboration
- **Address barriers to access and participation**, knowing where engagement is weakest, working with communities to design engagement and tackle barriers so that we can better connect those who are seldom heard

- **Ensure residents and organisations can hold our services to account** by sharing information, enabling scrutiny of decisions and their implementation, and providing good quality feedback
- Support Councillors in their role as **community champions** in their communities

### TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS, WE WILL:

- Ensure that **information about our organisation** including services, systems, structures, points of contact and decision making is easily accessible
- Continue to implement our **localities model and community development approach** to foster relationships and partnerships at a more local level and ensure collaboration between residents, service providers, partners and Councillors
- Ensure there is **meaningful VCSE representation and voice** in our structures and systems, enabling partnership working, innovation and **shared outcomes**
- Invest in **capacity and skills building** within the local VCSE sector, to enable organisations play a strong partnership role in meeting the needs of communities
- **Support other stakeholders, businesses and statutory partners** to strengthen their relationship with, and support of, VCSE organisations and communities





# How will we implement and monitor this strategy?

This is a strategic document intent on setting out our commitments to foster social action and a vibrant VCSE sector and developing this as a way of working across the Borough of Hounslow.

Working with partners across organisations and sectors is complex, hence we need to be flexible, iterative, adapting to changing circumstances.

We will implement this strategy by focussing on our own work as well as in partnership with others. This requires a two-prong approach to implementation and monitoring.

The strategy aims to coordinate action across the Council by various teams and workstreams. The commitments set out in this document which will be realised through programmes of work by various teams and workstreams, for example through the Future Asset Strategy Review, the Radical Overhaul of Consultation and Engagement, Locality Working.

The extent to which this work helps to realise the strategy's commitments will be monitored through **regular engagement with key stakeholders** and the **existing performance management systems**.

Regular review of the strategy over the four year period will ensure that the strategy evolves over its lifetime and can respond to opportunities and challenges that may arise.

In facilitating a partnership approach, we will lead an **annual learning review** of this strategy with partners, assessing how we are supporting social action, the VCSE sector and relationship building through our collective work; how this is being championed, and the learning from each other. This strategy is about relationships, and the learning review will help reinforce them as well as creating a space to grow, change and develop our collective action.



# Thriving Communities Partner Commitment

We, the undersigned, recognised the transformative work done by residents and voluntary sector groups in Hounslow.

We commit to working with residents, local groups, civil society partners and the London Borough of Hounslow to support local social action and local voluntary sector groups and thus enable a thriving civil society in Hounslow.



# Statements from Partners

## STATEMENT FROM THE HOUNSLOW BOROUGH BASED PARTNERSHIP

*The Hounslow Borough Based Partnership welcomes the Thriving Communities Strategy and is deeply aware of the important role civil society plays in keeping residents healthy and well.*

*Volunteering helps connect people to each other and into local networks and reduce isolation. We are keen to support efforts to promote volunteering across the borough. The Community Connectors and others such initiatives also help local people engage in social action without the formal structure of volunteering and provide opportunities for residents to become active agents in their own and their community's wellbeing.*

*Partnerships and work with our local voluntary sector organisations are key to help us all achieve our vision of having communities that are healthy, happy, connected and enabled to realise their full potential, whilst also addressing health inequalities. These groups are at the forefront of promoting wellbeing and independence. The MINT grant funding to local groups has been very successful in supporting our mental health initiatives. Our engagement with these groups also helps us to reach seldom heard and harder to reach people and share health messaging. We will continue to support and work with local voluntary groups across Hounslow and work with the Council, one of our key members to deliver this strategy.*

**Anne Stratton, Lead BBP Director and Chief Operating Officer of Hounslow and Richmond Community Trust**

## STATEMENT FROM THE HOUNSLOW EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

*Within our communities, schools serve as vital hubs. They not only impart knowledge encompassing the history, principles, and essence of British values but also actively engage in local social initiatives. By fostering a spirit of volunteerism and community involvement, schools rely on the support of local volunteers who contribute to various aspects of school life, including governance.*

*Numerous local schools collaborate with voluntary organisations, offering support through student involvement and leveraging their resources for extracurricular activities. Furthermore, many schools extend their facilities to these organisations, facilitating the hosting of local events and activities.*

*The Hounslow Education Partnership looks forward to collaborating with the London Borough of Hounslow to explore avenues for supporting schools in fostering volunteerism, encouraging civic engagement among students, and strengthening ties with our local voluntary sector.*

**Cormac Bourne, Partnership Director, HEP**

## STATEMENT FROM HOUNSLOW JOB CENTRE, DWP

*The DWP Job Centre in Hounslow is keen that people seeking employment consider volunteering to gain skills or reaccustom themselves with the working environment. Our Work Coaches work with individuals to look at opportunities such as volunteering and work experience. We can help with transport and childcare costs to access these opportunities. However, language barriers and digital skills are still major barriers for many. We are keen to work with the Council and Partners to help develop this offer.*

**Jaswant Lall, Partnership Manager, Department for Work and Pensions, Hounslow Jobcentre**

## STATEMENT FROM EALING AND HOUNSLOW COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SERVICE

*Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service plays a crucial role in supporting civil society by acting as a local infrastructure organisation. Our goal is to create and maintain thriving ecosystems that support various charities and community organisations in communities that are ready for social change. We do this through our Capacity Building Support program.*

*At a local level, we work closely with our strategic public partners and the Hounslow Voice Network to ensure that the voices of underrepresented communities are heard.*

*At a North West London level, we participate in the shaping of voluntary sector voice by being part of 3ST, a strategic partnership of third-sector agencies that work together to support and develop statutory services in the region.*

*We welcome the 2024-2028 Thriving Communities Strategy and the Council's commitment to supporting social action and civil society and will continue to work in partnership to support volunteering and local organisations.*

**Gurpreet Rana, CEO, Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service**

## STATEMENT FROM FIRE SERVICE

*As the London fire brigade in Hounslow, we want to be at the heart of our communities. We hold a weekly fire safety surgery, annual open days and would like our community spaces to be accessible to the community, where possible, as a resource. Currently, the station at Heston has a community space used for monthly events by Army veterans, the Alzheimer Society and Age UK as a dementia café.*

*Our overarching aim is to keep residents safe, this is set out in our boroughs risk management plan with a key element being community engagement. We conduct a lot of outreach work with partners in schools and VCSE organisations as well as organising and attending events based on information we hold about risks and our communities.*

*Many LFB staff in the borough actively volunteer and give up their time at community activities and events such as river clean ups, Junior Citizens scheme and our Fire Cadets programme.*

*We are keen to continue to work with the Council and build relationships with VCSE organisations particularly with the faith sector to foster good working relationships and deliver a wider fire safety message to seldom heard communities.*

**Scott Pearsall, Borough Commander Hounslow, London Fire Brigade**

## STATEMENT FROM HOUNSLOW MET POLICE

*The Metropolitan Police Service is intent on continuing to put communities at the centre of our local policing in Hounslow. We want to build confidence and trust in the police. Hounslow has a very diverse population with different risks and issues across its communities. We will deliver our ambitions through our New Met for London Strategy and implement the Strongest Ever Neighbourhood programme across the borough.*

*This includes a preventative policing approach, working positively with faith groups, schools, ward panels, youth and local organisations - helping them create safer neighbourhoods. We will continue to connect directly with our communities by actively participating at area forums, ward panel meetings and events.*

*We encourage local people to act by reporting crime and getting involved in their neighbourhood watch schemes to help make their communities safer. We will continue to develop our engagement with communities and are keen to support the work of the Council in building a thriving civil society, which will go some way to keeping our neighbourhoods and communities safer.*

**Superintendent Anil Puri, Neighbourhood Policing – Hounslow.**



## STATEMENT FROM WEST LONDON CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

West London Chamber of Commerce works with many small, medium and large businesses across Hounslow. We know that many of these businesses do a great deal to support their local communities, from one off donations to local partnerships where staff give their time to volunteer or help out charities.

In this tough economic climate, it's tempting for businesses just to focus on the bottom line, but we know that many don't and we are keen to work with the London Borough of Hounslow to celebrate this activity, look at what more can be done together and encourage good corporate citizenship in Hounslow

**Alan Rides, Chief Executive Officer and Sally Smith, Chief Operating Officer West London Chamber of Commerce**

## STATEMENT FROM BRENTFORD FOOTBALL CLUB COMMUNITY TRUST

The Brentford Football Community Sports Trust recently launched our latest Social Impact Study with a social impact value of £70.6m for the year 2022/23. While the data within the Study is celebrated, we also celebrate the journeys of participants and the positive engagement through sport that help create strong communities.

Tommy Ahadzi epitomises this, having been on a 10-year journey with the Trust from participant in the short breaks programme to volunteer to a Qualified Coach. He notes "I offered to volunteer at multi-sports camps with the Trust when I turned 18 as a way of giving back for all the support, I received from them. I plan to go on living by their example of always supporting other people no matter their differences or difficulties faced."

BFCCST is keen to continue to develop this volunteering offer as well as work with the London Borough of Hounslow around delivering long-standing programmes such as Youth Service, Street

Sports, Short Breaks, and Young Carers. Facility regeneration for improved sport and play is also a priority with the development of Playzones across the borough. We also want to ensure that we develop our relationships with local organisations for access and usage of our new education and social hub that form part of our offices adjacent to the GTEC stadium, and future Club House café at Gunnersbury Park as an accessible community space and asset.

**Luke Skelhorn, Operations Director, Brentford Football Club Community Trust**

## STATEMENT FROM THE PROBATION SERVICE

The Hounslow Kingston and Richmond Probation Service engages intensively with statutory partners through statutory boards. We also seek and engage with several trusted voluntary sector partners who provide services and support for people on probation. Specifically, within the Borough of Hounslow, we have recently issued grants to voluntary organisations who can support people on probation relating to 18-25s and minority ethnics to improve their community inclusiveness.

Every day, Probation Officers signpost people on probation to local groups, organisations for support and/or encourage volunteering. Our premise is to ensure that those we engage with have holistic support to engage them constructively in reducing the risk they pose to the public and individuals whilst promoting positive social and community values.

We are keen to ensure that we work with our partners to enable good signposting to local organisations to help support people on probation. This includes sharing of information, physical presence of partners within our Probation Office and direct referrals to a range of support services including accommodation, employment, training, education, substance misuse, mental health, finance management and developing positive relationships.

**Ayodeji Ogunyemi, Head of Service – Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond, The Probation Service, His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service**

## STATEMENT FROM WEST THAMES COLLEGE

West Thames College welcomes the work of the Council in supporting civil society in Hounslow. The College is a central hub for much of this activity not only for our students but for our staff and partners too.

Our students are engaged in social and civic action in a variety of different ways, including through volunteering, through sharing their individual and collective voice via active participation in internal and external student voice groups, through enrichment activities and through their curriculum. Many of our students engage in charitable activities and social action activities, supporting the needs of their local communities.

As a College, we work with a host of voluntary sector groups and faith groups. We support the work of local residents by enabling our college facilities to be used by local community groups, some on a permanent basis and many of whom proactively engage with us and our students, further strengthening community cohesion.

The College is committed to enhancing its work with the Council and other partners. One area we would like to develop further is our volunteering offer, to ensure that volunteering opportunities are available for all of our students, whether that is our adults returning to education, our students who have English as a second language or our students with special education needs.

It's really important to us that as a local college we remain an anchor institution, at the heart of the local communities and residents we serve.

**Tracy Aust, Principal, West Thames College**

## STATEMENT FROM WEST LONDON NHS TRUST

West London NHS Trust welcomes the Thriving Communities Strategy, the principles underpinning it and the council's commitment to promote volunteering and support local voluntary sector groups.

Our Trust Strategy for 2023-28 defines one of our six priorities as population health, inequalities and co-production and clearly states that we will co-produce and deliver high-quality, responsive care, tackling inequalities and focusing on the needs of our vulnerable and at-risk communities.

We see the development of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams in Hounslow as a key opportunity to enable this work. These teams bring together providers, the voluntary sector and communities in local areas to develop a deep local knowledge and maximise existing community resources. Mental health link workers and social prescribers are working together to signpost residents to local group activities and potential volunteering opportunities.

As an anchor institution, we acknowledge our role as a local employer and see volunteering as a pathway into work as well as a means to support outstanding patient care. Our Strategic Plan for Volunteering aims to involve volunteers in every aspect of our work and we have been working to develop our recruitment of people with SEND and refugees.

Working collaboratively with local voluntary organisations has been a key area of strength for the Trust. Another strategic priority is our collaboration and part in system leadership. We are really proud of the grants issued to local organisations through the council's processes. These aim to improve mental health and wellbeing for adults in Hounslow and are a key part of supporting to people with longer standing mental health needs.

We look forward to working with the council and local partners to further our support of local volunteering and civil society in Hounslow.

**Jo Manley, Deputy Director - Local Services, West London Trust**

## STATEMENT FROM FRIENDS OF FAITH

*Hounslow Friends of Faith is voluntary interfaith charity made up of members of different faiths and belief groups in Hounslow. We work together to increase knowledge and good relations between people of different faiths and beliefs and support equality and diversity.*

*Many of our members participated in the engagement around this Thriving Communities Strategy and we welcome the commitment of the London Borough of Hounslow to support civil society and voluntary sector groups.*

*Faith organisations play an important role in civil society. We promote hope, harmony and community, deliver services to many vulnerable residents and facilitate volunteering in our organisations and for other causes. We bring people together and build bridges across groups and communities.*

*We look forward to working with the London Borough of Hounslow and other partners to build more collaborative and thriving civil society.*

**Charanjit Ajit Singh**, Chair, Friends of Faith

## STATEMENT FROM HEALTHWATCH HOUNSLOW

*Healthwatch Hounslow welcomes and supports Hounslow's new Thriving Communities Strategy. This initiative embodies our shared vision for a more connected, inclusive, and vibrant community.*

*We recognize the importance of creating spaces where everyone feels valued, supported, and heard. By prioritizing health, well-being, and social cohesion, this strategy lays a strong foundation for a thriving borough.*

*We look forward to collaborating with Hounslow Council and other stakeholders to turn this vision into reality and to ensure the voices of our community are at the heart of its implementation.*

**Peter Goulding**, Healthwatch Board and  
**Aastha Binjrajka**, Operations and Research  
Manager, Healthwatch Hounslow

## A BOUGH WIDE APPROACH TO ENCOURAGING SOCIAL ACTION AND ENABLING CIVIL SOCIETY

For more information on the strategy, please contact: [community.development@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:community.development@hounslow.gov.uk)





London Borough  
of Hounslow

**ONE  
HOUNSLOW**

## **Thriving Communities Strategy 2024-2028**

A BOROUGH-WIDE APPROACH TO  
ENCOURAGING SOCIAL ACTION AND  
ENABLING CIVIL SOCIETY