



A Fairer Society

Strategy 2023-2028





Vision:
a resourced and
resilient voluntary and
community sector, able
to meet local challenges
and tackle inequalities.

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Foreword

Since its humble beginnings in 1997, Hackney CVS has grown into a high impact, award-winning organisation with a local staff team of over 30 and a strong network of nationwide and local partners.

We have long punched above our weight, empowering the local community to develop and lead solutions to the inequalities they face whilst providing the networks and spaces to help them work together on important projects and have a voice in the decisions affecting them. We have excellent strategic relationships, a strong reputation of trust and effectiveness, and access to several high-profile supporters and funders. The sector plays a vital role in helping to address inequalities and provide support to the most marginalised communities across City & Hackney. We see our role as bridging the gap between the depth of expertise held by the voluntary and community sector and our statutory partners.

However, the last few years have been a challenging time for local communities, the voluntary and community sectors, our partners, and us as an organisation. The impact of the pandemic laid bare the inequalities that exist in our society, with people from Black and Asian communities more likely to be affected and more likely to have less favourable outcomes. This points to a wider issue of racial inequality, which is critically important for us, given the rich diversity across City and Hackney.

Across the Capital, the cost-of-living crisis is affecting young and old alike people, and in particular people and families on low incomes, with many struggling to have their basic needs met such as being able to put a meal on the table, keep warm, or access affordable healthcare.

The pandemic has also created an increasingly challenging funding environment for the voluntary and community sector (VCS), as demands on their services grow, so does competition for funding. As people and communities struggle to recover from the

impact of the pandemic, further compounded by the cost-of-living crisis, 13 years of austerity, and public services which are meant to support our communities under unprecedented pressures, our role in supporting local communities has never been more important.

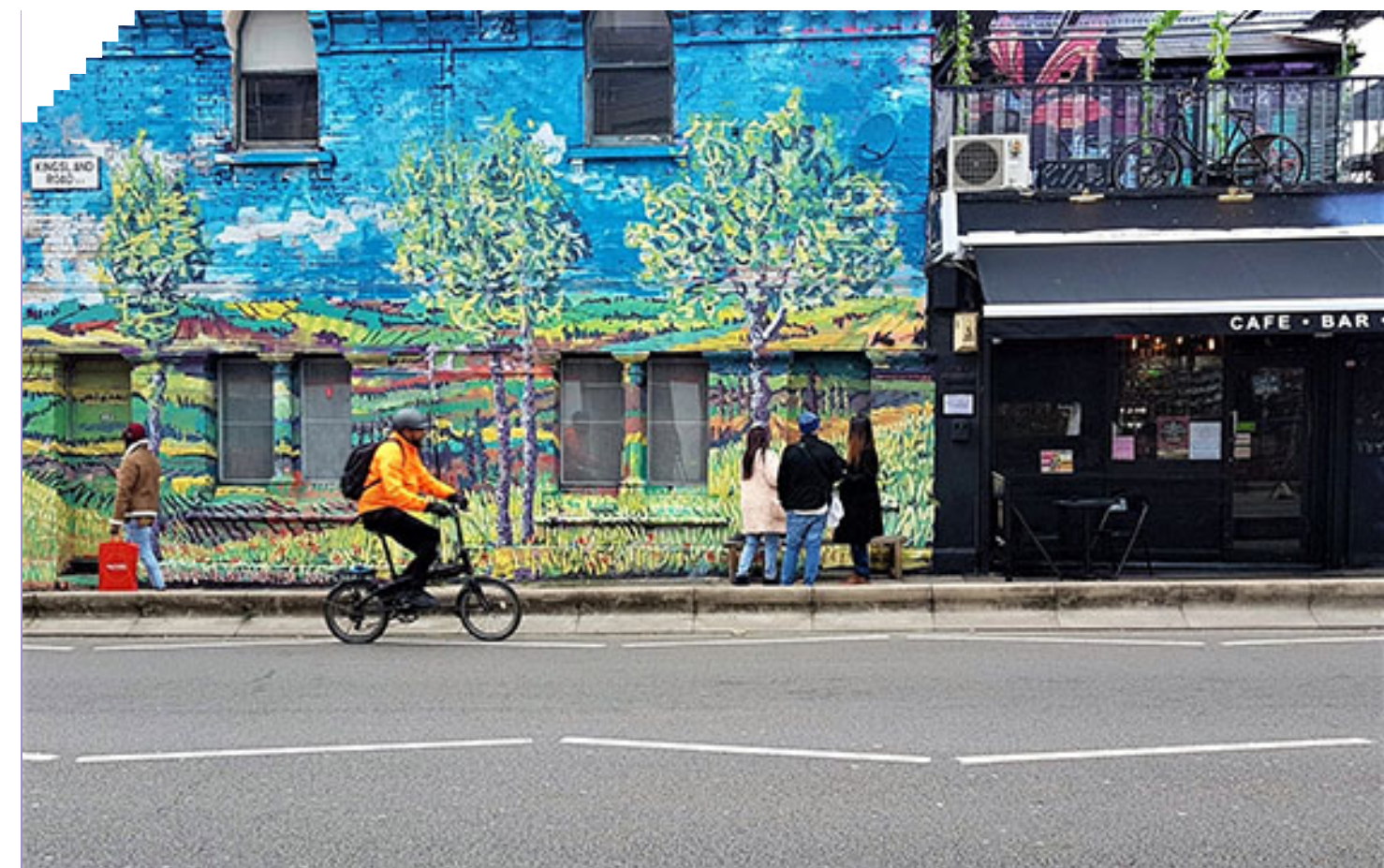
Our dedicated, small team is increasingly being called upon to respond to these emerging challenges, yet we know it's not sustainable for us to continue to work in a constant state of emergency. This strategy, therefore, has been developed with the purpose of allowing us to be laser-focused, directing where we should deploy our limited resources to have the greatest impact to the widest range of VCS organisations and communities.

We know that voluntary and community sector organisations are closest to communities facing the starkest inequalities. Therefore, we need to support them to have a voice around decision-making tables. We know that they are often

under-resourced, and therefore we must play a connector role, by holding spaces for the sector to convene, collaborate, co-produce, and develop partnerships. And finally, we know that we need to support the survival of the sector by providing organisational support, supporting them to access funding and using our position as an anchor institution to advocate for equitable partnership arrangements with public sector partners.

Therefore, 'A Fairer Society: Strategy 2023-2028', will guide our work over the next five years and help us deliver our vision for a resourced and resilient voluntary and community sector, able to meet local challenges and tackle inequalities.

Charles Middleton
Hackney CVS, Chair





Introduction

Tony Wong
CEO

'A Fairer Society' sets out our vision and approach for creating a resilient voluntary and community sector, resourced, and equipped to support local communities to thrive.

For over two and half decades, Hackney CVS has supported the voluntary and community sector to be at the heart of providing solutions to Hackney's problems. Our commitment has been based on our belief that everyone should have the best start in life, and opportunities to succeed, regardless of their background, race, social class, gender, sexuality, disability, or age. Our commitment remains unchanged; however, we must face the stark reality that life for many within society has become ever more challenging.

The Covid-19 pandemic touched everyone, and the ramifications are still evident three years on from when the UK first went into lockdown. People are still burdened by ill health, both physically and mentally, as a direct or indirect result of Covid-19. The pandemic brought into sharp focus the inequalities that exist for Black and Asian communities, which had the highest incidence and death rates respectively, as well as increased incidents of racism for our Chinese communities.

The 2020 murder of George Floyd, and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, shifted the dial on the anti-racist agenda, as did the local case of Child Q in the same year, all adding to the scar tissue for African-heritage communities that hold generational trauma from centuries-old oppression and discrimination.

And as we embark on our new 5-year strategy, we are faced with a cost-of-living crisis, the worst of its kind for over 40 years, with inflation peaking at 11%.

At the forefront of supporting local communities grappling with complex social, economic, and health challenges, has been the City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector. The trust it holds with the community and the expertise it holds within from people living in the community with their own lived experience has been crucial to supporting residents weather the storm or rather storms. As the local infrastructure body, we have pivoted to support and connect the VCS to each other, and with statutory partners so that all residents can access the support they need.

This strategy isn't about ripping up the rule book, but rather building on our 25-year history and re-organising ourselves to address the new world we find ourselves in. Our new priorities, Stronger voice, Effective bridge, and Thriving VCS will guide our work for the next five years. These have been developed through a process of internal dialogue between staff and trustees and with extensive consultation with local stakeholders from the VCS and public sector.

The commitments made in this strategy are dedicated to honouring the legacy of our founding Director, Adiaha Antigha, and the strong foundations Jake Ferguson's 16-year leadership created which we can now take to the next level over the course of the next five years.

Tony Wong

Our history

Hackney CVS has a rich history, beginning in 1995 when it was set up at the Print House on Ashwin Street by a small group of community organisations in response to a survey by the council, which asked local organisations what they needed from an infrastructure body. Adiaha Antigha, our first Director, joined in 1996, and we became incorporated on 6 May 1997.

During the two and a half decades since we opened our doors, we have worked tirelessly to create a fairer society for local communities, championing the needs of the underdog. Our role has been as an enabler, facilitator, and convenor for the voluntary and community sector around issues important to residents, broking collaboration and partnership working and acting as a bridging agent with local public bodies to address local inequalities.

Over the years, we have grown significantly, launching our first Community Chest grants programme in 2000, and the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) in 2001 – to represent the sector on the newly formed Hackney Local Strategic Partnership. This helped Hackney CVS turn a £50k deficit in 1996 to a £2.3 million turnover by 2005. Sadly, in 2006, Hackney CVS loses Adiaha Antigha, with her death being a huge loss to the organisation, and to the wider voluntary and community sector.

Jake Ferguson, who joined Hackney CVS in 2001, became our new Chief Executive. Continuing Adiaha's legacy, he oversaw the next phase of our development, including the establishment of Hackney Giving, our local giving fund, in 2014, and Connect Hackney: Ageing Better, 2015 – 2023, which addressed loneliness and isolation amongst older people, and funnelled over £4m to the local VCS.

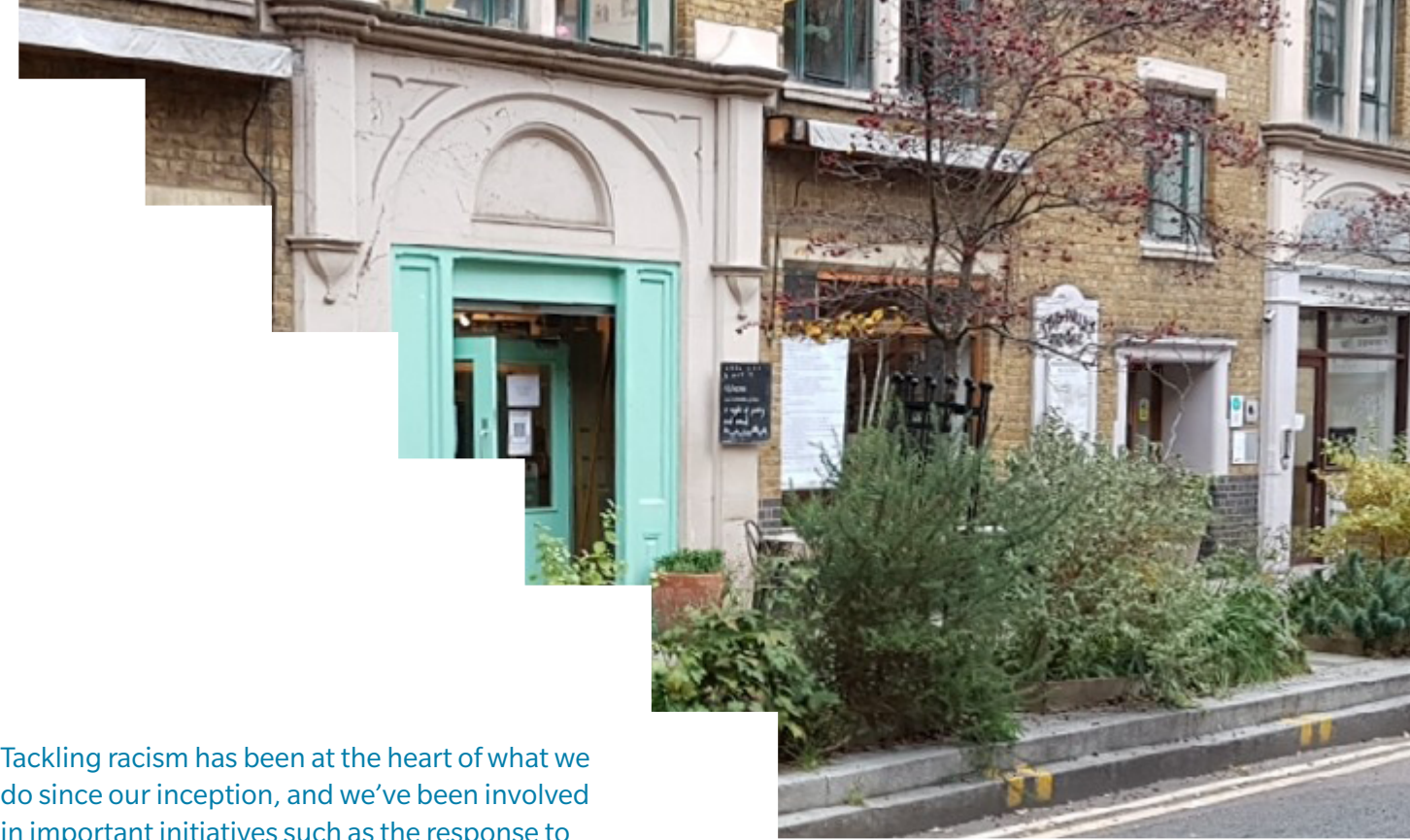


Tackling racism has been at the heart of what we do since our inception, and we've been involved in important initiatives such as the response to the 2011 riots, following which we set up the Hackney Account project, which has led the way in supporting young people from African heritage backgrounds to know their rights, and hold the police to account. More recently, Hackney Account played a pivotal role in convening the local community to respond to the 2020 case of Child Q. We continue to play a leading role in ensuring learning from these horrendous events drives lasting change through our involvement in the Community Resilience Partnership.

We supported the development of the Hackney Council 2015-25 'Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men' (renamed in 2023 to 'Improving Outcomes for Black Children and Young People') and supported the creation of a community accountability board to oversee delivery of the strategy. In response to the 2020 racist murder of George Floyd, we drafted an anti-racism manifesto for our local public sector partners, which Hackney Council included in their own anti-racism strategy, and we supported the local voluntary and community sector to process, heal and respond. Jake Ferguson stepped down in 2021, and Tony Wong, who had joined Hackney CVS in 2018, succeeded Jake as our new Chief Executive. Tony has ensured we continue to advocate for the voluntary and community sector, tackle inequalities, and drive the anti-racism agenda.

Today, we continue to play a vital role in the community, with recent achievements including Hackney Giving surpassing £2m in grants awarded to local voluntary and community sector organisations to respond to issues such as Covid-19, the Cost-of-living crisis, and supporting Turkish and Syrian communities impacted by the earthquakes. In 2021 we delivered City & Hackney's first VCS Assembly, which has brought hundreds of local VCS and statutory partners together to address issues such as reducing school exclusions, and inequitable funding for Black & Global Majority-led VCS organisations – leading to a set of Anti-racist commissioning principles endorsed by the City & Hackney Health & Care Board for wide adoption across the City & Hackney placed-based partnership.

Looking to the future, through this strategy Hackney CVS remains committed to building on our legacy of tackling discrimination in all forms and furthering the anti-racist agenda. Partnership working will remain central to our approach to tackling inequalities and driving social justice to create a fairer society.



Executive Summary

The purpose of our strategy, 'A Fairer Society: 2023-2028' is to guide our focus for the next five years, and throughout the development process, our aim has been to ensure that our strategy truly reflects what people told us and provides us.

It will be used as a compass to direct where we need to focus our resources to deliver the change our partners and stakeholders want to see and help us and potential partners identify new opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

It was developed with our staff, led by a cross-organisational working group, and through the appointment of a consultant who helped us to hold all staff and trustee development sessions and undertake extensive consultation with our partners from across the voluntary and community sector, and the public sector.

Our new vision, mission and values, and principles and behaviours, have all been informed by what we have heard as part of the development process and will be used to guide how we work across our organisation, with each other, and with our valued partners and stakeholders.

These are our new strategic goals.

1. Stronger Voice

By stronger voice, we mean collectively empowering all community organisations, and seldom-heard communities, across City & Hackney to inform, shape, and influence the long-term transformative decisions affecting residents.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. Increased understanding across the voluntary and community sector of the City & Hackney health and care system, and increased confidence to engage.
2. The views of City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector are reflected in health and care system partner strategies and policies.
3. Increased dialogue between City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector and local statutory partners.

2. Effective Bridge

By an effective bridge, we mean developing the channels that enable local VCS organisations themselves to be the agents of local change, and through these directly address the inequalities within City & Hackney.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. The VCS is recognised and valued as a trusted partner by system partners e.g., resourced to engage in system meetings, core funded, and longer-term/sustainably funded.
2. The VCS is involved and empowered to coproduce service design e.g., delivery plans, implementation plans
3. The voice of grassroots organisations is listened to and acted on by system partners.

3. A Thriving VCS

By a thriving VCS, we mean bringing all VCS in City & Hackney together to understand social inequality, addressing this through collaboration, and ensuring that all VCS organisations have the capacity and resources they need.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. Increased collaboration and partnership working between City & Hackney's VCS.
2. City & Hackney's VCS workforce is supported and enabled.
3. City & Hackney's VCS organisations are (financially) resilient and confident of their sustainability.

We have also identified six cross-cutting themes which span all three of our strategic priorities, based on what we've learned through the delivery of our previous strategy, and what our members, partners, and stakeholders told us:

1. **Agile and responsive.**
2. **Being an anti-racist organisation.**
3. **Approach to collaboration and partnership.**
4. **Equality, diversity and inclusion.**
5. **Financially resilient.**
6. **Environmentally sustainable.**

Our three new strategic goals provide the framework for how our departments and teams will deliver their activities, and collaborate across teams and with our partners, to achieve our strategic outcomes. Underpinning this strategy is a **three-year business plan**, which provides our staff with a more detailed roadmap for delivering this strategy. We will only be able to deliver this strategy provided we have the necessary resources, and therefore we will also have a **fundraising strategy** setting out our fundraising priorities and approaches to securing the necessary resources outlined in our business plan.

We know that our ability to deliver this strategy, is dependent on the strength of the relationships we hold with our members, partners, and stakeholders. As part of developing this strategy, we have undertaken a stakeholder mapping exercise, which has informed our new **communications and engagement strategy**, which sets out how we will reach, communicate, and engage others in our work,

We also recognise that to deliver our strategic goals and achieve each of our nine outcomes, we need to work in alignment with our strategic partners. Our strategy, therefore, explains how our strategic priorities align with those of our strategic partners, and details our current relationships through existing partnerships. We anticipate these will evolve over the next five years, and moving forward, we will use our strategic goals, and correlating outcomes to determine future opportunities for us to partner and align our activities.



City & Hackney Profile

Population profile

City and Hackney are home to a richly diverse set of communities, with over 89 languages spoken, with both places experiencing an increase in population size when comparing 2011 and 2021 census data, with the City of London seeing the third-largest percentage increase in London. Hackney has experienced a 17.8% growth in the over-65 age group population. Both City & Hackney have experienced a growth of residents who identify as other than White. Whilst Hackney experienced a decrease in the number of residents reporting to have a disability, this figure rose in the City of London. Both City and Hackney saw an increase in the number of residents reporting good health and a decrease in the number of residents reporting their health as bad.

Hackney

City of London

Population size	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In Hackney, the population size has increased by 5.3%, from around 246,300 in 2011 to 259,200 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800, and is lower than the increase for London (7.7%).In 2021, Hackney ranked 68th for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England, which is a fall of two places in a decade. It is the third most densely populated of London's 33 local authority areas, with around 97 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The population of the City of London increased by 16.4%, from around 7,400 in 2011 to around 8,600 in 2021. This means the City of London's population saw the third-largest percentage increase in London.This area was among the top 25% of the most densely populated English local authority areas at the last census.
Age	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">There has been an increase of 17.8% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 6.3% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and a decrease of 3.3% in children aged under 15 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Between the last two censuses, the average (median) age of the City of London decreased by two years, from 39 to 37 years of age, compared to 35 years across London.The number of people aged 25 to 34 years rose by just under 450 (an increase of 24.6%), while the number of residents aged 4 years and under fell by fewer than 50 (9.3% decrease).

Hackney

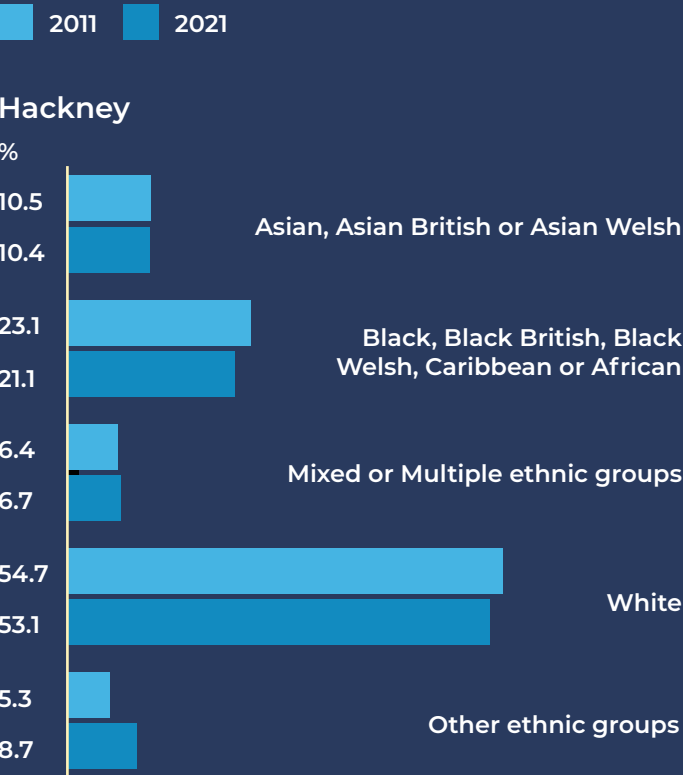
City of London

Employment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The percentage of people aged 16 years and over (excluding full-time students) who were employed increased in Hackney, but fell across England.In Hackney, the percentage who were employed rose from 58.3% in 2011 to 62.4% in 2021, while across England it fell from 56.5% to 55.7%. During the same period, the regional percentage increased from 58.6% to 59.4%.The percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were unemployed (excluding full-time students) in Hackney fell from 6.8% to 4.7%, while the percentage of people aged 16 years and over who were retired (economically inactive) decreased from 8.7% to 7.8%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The City of London saw England's largest percentage-point rise in the proportion of people aged 16 years and over (excluding full-time students) who were unemployed (from 2.8% in 2011 to 3.5% in 2021).Despite the decrease, the City of London was in the highest 1% of English local authority areas for the share of people aged 16 years and over and in employment who said they usually worked over 49 hours per week in 2021.
Ethnic groups	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 8.7% of Hackney residents identified their ethnic group within the "Other" category ("Arab" or "Any other ethnic group"), up from 5.3% in 2011. The 3.3 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area.In 2021, 53.1% of people in Hackney identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 54.7% in 2011), while 21.1% identified their ethnic group within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" category (compared with 23.1% the previous decade).The percentage of people who identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category decreased from 10.5% in 2011 to 10.4% in 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 16.8% of the City of London residents identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category, up from 12.7% in 2011. The 4.1 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area.In 2021, 69.4% of people in the City of London identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 78.6% in 2011), while 5.6% identified their ethnic group within the "Other" category ("Arab" or "Any other ethnic group") (compared with 2.1% the previous decade).The percentage of people who identified their ethnic group within the "Mixed or Multiple" category increased from 3.9% in 2011 to 5.5% in 2021.

Unpaid care	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 3.4% of Hackney residents (aged five years and over) reported providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care each week. This figure decreased from 5.3% in 2011. These are age-standardised proportions.In 2021, just under 1 in 50 people (1.9%) reported providing between 20 and 49 hours of unpaid care each week, compared with 1.6% in 2011. The proportion of Hackney residents (aged five years and over) that provided at least 50 hours of weekly unpaid care decreased from 2.5% to 2.3%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 4.3% of City of London residents (aged five years and over) reported providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care each week. This figure decreased from 6.7% in 2011. These are age-standardised proportions.In 2021, 1.0% of residents (aged five years and over) reported providing between 20 and 49 hours of unpaid care each week, compared with 0.8% in 2011. The proportion of the City of London residents (aged five years and over) that provided at least 50 hours of weekly unpaid care decreased from 1.1% to 1.0%.
Religion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 36.3% of Hackney residents reported having “No religion”, making it the most common response in this local authority area (up from 28.2% in 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 43.8% of City of London residents reported having “No religion”, making it the most common response in this local authority area (up from 34.2% in 2011).
Disability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hackney saw England’s joint second-largest percentage-point fall (alongside Tower Hamlets) in the proportion of residents who were identified as being disabled and limited a lot (from 13.2% in 2011 to 9.6% in 2021). These are age-standardised proportions.London Borough of Hackney: Charedi Orthodox Jewish community engagement Local Government Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the City of London, the proportion of non-disabled residents increased from 86.3% in 2011 to 88.2% in 2021.The percentage of people who were identified as being disabled and limited a lot in the City of London fell from 5.6% to 3.9%, while the percentage of people who were identified as being disabled and limited a little decreased from 8.2% to 7.9%.
Health	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 48.5% of Hackney residents described their health as “very good”, increasing from 41.8% in 2011. Those describing their health as “good” fell from 30.5% to 29.5%. These are age-standardised proportions.The proportion of Hackney residents describing their health as “very bad” decreased from 3.0% to 2.2%, while those describing their health as “bad” fell from 7.8% to 5.7%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2021, 56.6% of City of London residents described their health as “very good”, increasing from 55.0% in 2011. Those describing their health as “good” rose from 31.1% to 31.2%. These are age-standardised proportions.The proportion of City of London residents describing their health as “very bad” decreased from 0.9% to 0.7%, while those describing their health as “bad” fell from 3.0% to 2.4%.

In 2021, 8.7% of usual residents in Hackney identified their ethnic group within the “Other” category (“Arab” or “Any other ethnic group”).

Percentage of usual residents by ethnic group.



NB: Census 2021 data was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which may have influenced how people responded to the survey. Therefore, it is advised that caution be taken with comparisons between 2011 and 2021 datasets.



Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Profile

The City & Hackney voluntary and community sector is made up of 1,951 registered charities (820 in the City of London / 1,131 in Hackney) and hundreds more community organisations, with a combined income of £3.9bn, which presents a £0.8bn decrease from three years prior.

Nationally the VCS contributes £20bn to the UK's economy or 1% of GDP, however, has experienced a reduced rate of growth. The number of Major (£10m - £100m) and Super-major (>£100m) organisations continues to increase and receive an increasing share of the sector's total income. In City & Hackney, around 82% of VCS organisations have an income of between <£10k - £1m) and as such are disproportionately impacted by the reduced rate of growth across the sector.

The top five services provided are Education and Training (1,144), poverty reduction (804), religious activities (754), advancement of health or saving lives (417), and arts/culture/heritage/science (392).

Nationally the VCS contributes
£20bn
to the UK economy

Since 2011, the VCS workforce has grown by

27%

The top five served groups served by the City & Hackney VCS are children/young people (1,005), elderly or older people (538), people of a particular ethnic or racial origin (511), people with disabilities (481), and other defined groups (295).

National data sets out that since 2011, the VCS workforce has grown by 27%. Women make up 66% of the VCS workforce, whilst men make up 33%. Whilst nationally, 90% of the workforce is White, across City & Hackney, particularly Hackney, this figure is likely to be more representative of the local ethnic profile.

Nationally, for the first time in 20 years, almost half of the VCS income is from the public and represents its largest funding source, followed by government funding which represents a quarter of the sector's income. However, most other sources of funding have declined, including both local and central government funding, and proportionately, smaller organisations receive less of their funding from the government.

Sources:

- NVCO: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/news-and-insights/news-index/uk-civil-society-almanac-2022/executive-summary/#/>
- Charity Commission

Our vision, mission, and values underpin all our work. They are important because they ensure our operations align internally and with those of our stakeholders and partners.

They provide the foundation for our decision-making and ensure we remain faithful to our core purpose and function and support our stakeholders and partners to experience us as one united entity.

Vision, Mission, & Values

A. A Vision is what we want to achieve in the outside world – i.e., what would the world look like if Hackney CVS was totally successful and delivering all it wanted to.



Our Vision:

A resourced and resilient voluntary and community sector, able to meet local challenges and tackle inequalities.

B. A Mission is our core purpose – the main reason why Hackney CVS exists.



Our Mission:

To support City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector to engage and collaborate with each other, and local decision-makers, and to be respected as equal partners within the local health and care system.

C. Values are what we stand for as an organisation, and see as critical to achieving our vision and delivering our mission.



Our Values:

- Championing **fairness** and **social justice**
- Being a catalyst for **equity, inclusion,** and **diversity**

Our Principles and Behaviours

Our principles and behaviours (CCARE) govern how we have agreed to work with each other, being respectful, treating others with dignity and demonstrating through our actions that we care. In doing so, we honour our vision, mission, and values, in all efforts to achieve our strategic objectives.

PRINCIPLES

1. Communicating effectively

We will communicate with the intent to engage each other.

We will do this by:

- Using plain language.
- Being open, inclusive, and accessible in all forms of communication.
- Actively listening, responding, and valuing the contributions of others.



BEHAVIOURS

PRINCIPLES

2. Collaborating productively

We will work and support each other, knowing together we are greater than the sum of our parts.



We will do this by:

- Being courageous and innovative, unafraid to take risks (through fear of failure).
- Sharing resources, skills, and knowledge.
- Empowering others.
- Taking a trauma-informed approach when working with others.

BEHAVIOURS

PRINCIPLES

3. Always learning

We will continuously grow and develop to deliver our best.

We will do this by:

- Learning from our failures, as well as our successes.
- Providing constructive feedback and supporting a growth culture.
- Using our learning to improve productivity, efficiency, and impact.



BEHAVIOURS

PRINCIPLES

4. Respecting others

We will be polite, courteous, and considerate of others.



We will do this by:

- Treating others with respect and dignity.
- Being professional by taking accountability for our responsibilities and actions.
- Asking for support when needed and supporting others when we can.

BEHAVIOURS

PRINCIPLES

5. Evolving our diversity

We will be intentional in developing diversity.

We will do this by:

- Proactively creating diverse teams.
- Encouraging and respecting different views and opinions.
- Supporting everyone to thrive and develop.
- Being anti-racist, and challenging discrimination in all forms.



BEHAVIOURS

Lessons learned from our previous strategy

We have always been and will continue to strive to be a forward-thinking ambitious organisation.

This mindset has served us well. However, it also means that on occasion, we don't always achieve what we set out to deliver, either because our ambitions were not rooted in firm and actionable plans; we were unable to secure the necessary resources; we've needed to pivot to respond to emerging needs and crises, such as the case with the Covid-19 global pandemic; or just simply, we got it wrong.

We would be doing an injustice to our members, partners, and stakeholders who rely on us, as well as ourselves, if we didn't examine where we fell short, interrogate the reasons why, and use the lessons learned to inform our future approach.

Our previous strategy had four strategic objectives:

1. **Supporting stronger, thriving voluntary and community organisations**
2. **Developing successful delivery partnerships**
3. **Strengthening the sector's voice to effect change**
4. **Being a sustainable, responsible organisation, driven by our values**

What did we do well?

Some of our **key achievements** include:

- Organisational development is at the core of what we do as the local CVS for City & Hackney. Over the course of our previous strategy, we supported over 240 organisations by providing training, 1:1 support or brokerage services, collectively developing the capacity of the VCS. We know the need is often greater than our resources allow, and therefore we ensure we prioritise organisations with the greatest need and will seek to grow our investment in this area of our work.
- Since relaunching Hackney Giving in 2020, we have channelled over £2m through the awarding of 231 grants to 124 individual VCS organisations. This has largely been due to our NHS and Public Health partners seeing Hackney Giving as a vehicle to reach marginalised communities, it's a testament to the trust our statutory partners have in us and the reach we have across the local VCS. Our success has been our ability to flex to the needs of the VCS and key partners, and therefore being 'agile and responsive' is now one of our cross-cutting themes to embed this new way of working throughout. Building on this success we want to further develop Hackney Giving to respond to community-identified needs and will be looking to develop new relationships with potential investors who share our values for championing fairness and placing communities in the lead to drive social change.
- We have developed transformational programmes across the health and care landscape which bring VCS groups together around communities and common agendas.

Our networks, special interest groups, forums, and assemblies have brought together almost 2000 VCS organisations, statutory partners, and residents, allowing cross-sector collaboration, and partnership development, as well as allowing the VCS to remain connected and informed. We will now build on these foundations, and further evolve our activity in this space to respond to funding threats, and capacity constraints, to ensure the VCS is sustainably embedded within the local health and care system.

- We have been a leading force around the Anti-Racism agenda, working closely with both local and national partners to drive racial justice. Our 'How to make City & Hackney Anti-racist' assembly and follow-up 'Anti-racist commissioning' assembly have led to the development of a set of Anti-racist commissioning principles, approved by the City & Hackney Health and Care Board for adoption by the City & Hackney placed-based partnership, meaning that the VCS, particularly Black & Global Majority organisations, will have more equitable access to funding, leading to communities experiencing racial injustice having equitable access to culturally appropriate services. We will continue to drive the racial justice agenda and have adopted 'Being an anti-racist organisation' as one of our cross-cutting themes.

What we were unable to achieve/measure?

Lessons learned that have informed our new strategy:

- We know we haven't always been able to demonstrate our impact but realise we need to if we are to demonstrate to our partners and stakeholders why they should trust in us. Improved systems and processes would allow us to target our resources where they will have the greatest impact. A robust outcomes framework underpins this strategy and will allow us to track and monitor our activity,

and we will be actively seeking to invest in our systems so that this data can be easily collected, collated, analysed, and reported to demonstrate our impact. We'll also be revising our user survey to make sure we only ask questions which help us understand the needs of our VCS partners and use the findings to inform service innovations.

- We know that the issues facing local communities are multifaceted and require different stakeholders to work together to bring about sustainable change. We also know that VCS organisations often lack the capacity to deliver wholesale change, and therefore the pooling of resources allows for further impact, however, scarce funding has pitted sector organisations against each other. Therefore, we understand that we have a role to support the development of equitable partnerships. However, we also recognise we haven't always got this right. We haven't clearly defined our role in supporting partnership development, and we haven't always been clear on why at times we have led partnerships, sometimes it's because we are asked to by funders/commissioners, and other times, it's because if we don't, no one will. 'Collaboration and partnership' have been agreed as one of our cross-cutting themes, and outlines our commitment to transparent and open communication, and strong governance to ensure we build strong partnerships. We will only lead partnerships where we have the consent of the sector, and where it doesn't put us in a position of competition. We will scale the promotion of our organisational development support so that our offer is clear and accessible.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1. Stronger Voice

By stronger voice, we mean collectively empowering all community organisations, and seldom-heard communities, across City & Hackney to inform, shape, and influence the long-term transformative decisions affecting residents.

On 1st July 2022, The Health & Care Act 2022 introduced new legislation for how health & care services and pathways needed to improve integration and join-up to facilitate a person-centred approach to improving health outcomes and patient experience. The Act sets out a new ambitious way of delivering health and care services with the introduction of 42 Integrated Care Systems (ICS) across England. City & Hackney is one of seven placed-based partnerships (PBP) that sits within the North-East London (NEL) ICS. At both a NEL ICS and City & Hackney PBP level, the new legislation makes clear that the voluntary and community sector (VCS) is to be treated as equal partner to meet the requirements of the new legislation.

In the background to this ongoing health transformation, the City & Hackney PBP has continued to respond to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 infections and cases of long-covid are still rippling through local communities, and there is a backlog of elective care from treatments delayed as the NHS prioritised responding to Covid-19. This is further compounded by workforce challenges affecting the NHS, social care, the VCS, and wider public sector services.

From the onset of the pandemic, City & Hackney's VCS quickly mobilised as part of the frontline response to meet the urgent needs of vulnerable residents. Its ability to do so was rooted in its reach within communities and the trust that residents have in the sector.



City & Hackney's VCS is one of the most diverse in the country, reflective of the rich diversity and tapestry of the local community. It holds a wealth of experience, insights, and expertise on a range of health and social issues affecting residents, often with specialist knowledge of the solutions needed to address these challenges, often because the sector is made up of a significant proportion of residents that fuse their professional expertise with personal lived experience. Without a seat around decision-making tables, this specialist expertise is unable to inform activity being delivered to improve outcomes for local communities.

We acknowledge the challenges facing residents over the next five years are a result of decades-long entrenched inequalities and social injustices within our society. We recognise that long-term change means also developing future community leaders, and this is why we give a stronger voice to residents with lived experience so that any investment in delivering our strategy can create a legacy to achieve longer-lasting change.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. Increased understanding across the voluntary and community sector of the City & Hackney health and care system, and increased confidence to engage.
2. The views of City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector are reflected in health and care system partner strategies and policies.
3. Increased dialogue between City & Hackney's voluntary and community sector and local statutory partners.

We will achieve a stronger voice for the VCS by:

- Pro-actively engaging with a wide range of organisations, including tenancy associations/start-ups/entrepreneurs, in fact, anyone who wants to make a difference.
- Advocating for VCS organisations to do the talking (not Hackney CVS).
- Actively creating opportunities for smaller organisations to be part of City & Hackney's voluntary and community sectors' collective voice.



Directorate or Function	Activity
Communications, outreach, and engagement	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Develop engaging, jargon-free communication materials, and use varied communication channels to reach the VCS to promote useful information and resources. → Actively promote opportunities for the VCS to engage with the local health and care system. → Use our communication channels and platform to spotlight VCS good practices and impact data, to amplify the reach and influence of the VCS. → We will prioritise outreach to VCS organisations furthest away from decision-making structures, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grassroots organisations/community groups. ■ VCS organisations serving communities with accessibility/ language barriers. ■ VCS organisations that serve under-represented cultural heritage and/or faith-based communities. ■ VCS organisations serving communities facing extreme poverty. <p>This is not an exhaustive list but is provided as the indicative criterion for how we will prioritise and target our resources.</p>
Hackney Giving (grant-making)	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Promote funding opportunities to the VCS. → Measure the impact of VCS activities delivered using our grant funding and share impact data with relevant stakeholders and partners to demonstrate the impact of the VCS, particularly those that serve under-represented cultural heritage and/or faith-based communities.
VCS Organisational Development	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Deliver VCS organisational support through our training, 1:1 support, and brokering services, to build the capacity of the sector to have a stronger voice within the local City & Hackney health and care system. → Gather data on the needs of organisations accessing our organisational development support and share this with relevant partners across the local health and care system. → Promote VCS services to local health and care system partners supporting join-up and collaboration between VCS and statutory services.

Directorate or Function	Activity
Health Transformation	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the VCS and the local health and care system partners, placing the voice of the VCS at the centre. → Amplify the voice of the VCS in meetings where Hackney CVS is invited to represent the VCS in place of the sector. In these circumstances, we will seek the views and opinions of the VCS, and advocate for direct involvement with the VCS to develop, refine, and confirm plans. → Ensure, wherever funding permits us to do so, that the VCS is compensated for their time, insights, and contributions to meetings and forums in which the sector's voice is critical to improving the health outcomes and/or reducing health inequalities and/or social injustice. → Support the development of consortia and partnerships that provide for a stronger voice of VCS partners to influence change; and improve service delivery for the benefit of local communities.
Young People & Families	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the children, young people, and families VCS sector with local health and care system partners, placing the voice of young people at the centre. → Amplify the voice of the children, young people, and families VCS sector in meetings where Hackney CVS is invited to represent the VCS in place of the sector. In these instances, we will seek the views of relevant VCS partners, and young people, and advocate for direct involvement with the VCS to develop, refine, and confirm plans. → Deliver a programme of activity to address social injustices led by young people themselves, adopting anti-oppressive and strengths-based approaches. → Deliver our Youth Leadership Model to ensure young people experiencing the highest levels of social injustice have a voice around decision-making tables, with the ability to influence systems-change within organisational structures which interact with young people.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2. Effective Bridge

By an effective bridge, we mean developing the channels that enable local VCS organisations themselves to be the agents of local change, and through these directly address the inequalities within City & Hackney.

Since we were established in 1997, we have supported the voluntary and community sector to be at the heart of providing solutions to local problems. We have long championed the need for those most impacted by health inequalities and social injustice to speak directly with commissioners and decision-makers.

Hackney has seen significant change over the last decade. Whilst these changes have been welcomed by some, others have felt left behind, particularly young people from Black and Global Majority backgrounds.

2020 marked the year the world as we knew it changed, with the onset of a global pandemic. Evidence published by Public Health England revealed that the highest rates of infection were among people of Black ethnicity and that people from Asian backgrounds had the highest risk of death. The pandemic, rather than creating inequalities, exposed and exacerbated longstanding inequalities that affect people from Black and Asian backgrounds.

2020 was also marked as the year that the world started a global debate on racism in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. Hackney CVS has always been a leading voice for change to tackle racism and was at the forefront of the local debates about how City & Hackney can be anti-racist.

Structural racism, the political and social disadvantages experienced by people from Black and Global Majority backgrounds, can only



be tackled by dismantling and rebuilding the structures that frame our society.

VCS organisations, often User-led organisations, need to be centred within new societal structures to eradicate discrimination. A more diverse set of voices need to occupy decision-making seats, and governance structures need to evolve to be more accommodating of people from under-represented groups.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. **The VCS is recognised and valued as a trusted partner by system partners e.g., resourced to engage in system meetings, core funded, and longer-term/sustainably funded.**
2. **The VCS is involved and empowered to coproduce service design e.g., delivery plans, implementation plans**

3. **The voice of grassroots organisations is listened to and acted on by system partners.**

We will achieve an effective bridge for the VCS by:

- **Convening opportunities for local VCS organisations to engage directly with statutory and non-statutory decision-making bodies.**
- **Supporting residents to collectively be a part of transformative decision-making about Hackney public services.**
- **Supporting the VCS and public sector bodies to coproduce the design and delivery of local services.**

Directorate or Function	Activity
Communications, outreach, and engagement	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use our communication channels and platform to share information between the VCS and statutory partners. → We will prioritise outreach to VCS organisations furthest away from decision-making structures, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grassroots organisations/community groups. ■ VCS organisations serving communities with accessibility/ language barriers. ■ VCS organisations that serve under-represented cultural heritage and/or faith-based communities. ■ VCS organisations serving communities facing extreme poverty. <p>This is not an exhaustive list but is provided as the indicative criterion for how we will prioritise and target our resources.</p>
Hackney Giving (grant-making)	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Serve as a vehicle for the statutory sector to fund the City & Hackney VCS to address health inequalities and improve the wellbeing of local communities. → Measure the impact of VCS activities delivered using our grant funding and share impact data with relevant stakeholders and partners to demonstrate the impact of the VCS, particularly those that serve under-represented cultural heritage and/or faith-based communities.
VCS Organisational Development	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Deliver VCS organisational support through training, 1:1 support, and brokering services, to develop the skills within the VCS workforce, furthering the sectors’ ability to engage and influence systems-change within the local City & Hackney health and care system, as well as the North-East London Integrated Care System (ICS).

Directorate or Function	Activity
Health Transformation	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the VCS and the local health and care system partners, placing the voice of the VCS at the centre. We will facilitate this at a neighbourhood, City & Hackney placed-based, and North-East London level. → Gather and report impact data and use this to advocate for the VCS to be equitably and sustainably funded to engage with and deliver services as an equal partner within the City and Hackney, and North-East London partnerships.
Young People & Families	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the children, young people, and families VCS sector with local health and care system partners. → Via our Youth Leadership Model, provide a bridge between system leaders and young people on relevant issues of strategic significance.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3.



A Thriving VCS

By a thriving VCS, we mean bringing all VCS in City & Hackney together to understand social inequality, addressing this through collaboration, and ensuring that all VCS organisations have the capacity and resources they need.

The City & Hackney voluntary and community sector is made up of over 1,950 registered charities and hundreds more community organisations, with a combined income of £3.9bn, which presents a £0.8bn decrease from three years prior.

For organisations to be able to thrive, they need to be connected and enabled to collaborate to support the pooling of limited resources, and for the sharing of skills and services which better provide a person-centred approach for residents.

Nationally the VCS contributes £20bn to the UK's economy or 1% of GDP, however, has experienced a reduced rate of growth. The number of Major (£10m - £100m) and Super-major (>£100m) organisations continues to increase and receive an increasing share of the sector's total income. In City & Hackney, around 82% of VCS organisations have an income of between <£10k - £1m) and as such are disproportionately impacted by the reduced rate of growth across the sector.

1,950
registered
charities

100s
of community
groups

£3.9bn
combined
income

Nationally, for the first time in 20 years, almost half of the VCS income is from the public and represents its largest funding source, followed by government funding which represents a quarter of the sector's income. However, most other sources of funding have declined, including both local and central government funding, and proportionately, smaller organisations receive less of their funding from the government.

The ability of any organisation to thrive is dependent on its resources, and the capacity to meet the demand of its service users; as well as to invest in its financial sustainability. The reduction in government funding creates increased demand for grant-based funding, which is often project-based and limited in its contribution towards core costs.

We recognise therefore, that we need to target our resources to where they are most needed, critically Micro (<£10,000) and Small (between £10,000 - £100,00) VCS orgs, which benefit least from government funding, and consequently have the least capacity to invest in their sustainability.

By 2028, we want to have achieved the following outcomes:

1. **Increased collaboration and partnership working between City & Hackney's VCS.**
2. **City & Hackney's VCS workforce is supported and enabled.**
3. **City & Hackney's VCS organisations are (financially) resilient and confident of their sustainability.**

We will achieve a thriving VCS by:

- **Building our understanding of the City & Hackney VCS, including grassroots organisations, social entrepreneurs, community groups, and resident associations.**
- **Supporting the VCS in City & Hackney to work together.**
- **Building local VCS capacity empowering VCS organisations in City & Hackney to take the lead in tackling inequality and driving social justice.**



Directorate or Function	Activity
Communications, outreach, and engagement	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Use our communication channels and platform to share information with the City & Hackney VCS about funding opportunities, training, and system-level engagement opportunities. → We will prioritise outreach to VCS organisations furthest away from decision-making structures, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grassroots organisations/community groups. ■ VCS organisations serving communities with accessibility/ language barriers. ■ VCS organisations that serve under-represented cultural heritage and/or faith-based communities. ■ VCS organisations serving communities facing extreme poverty. <p>This is not an exhaustive list but is provided as the indicative criterion for how we will prioritise and target our resources.</p>
Hackney Giving (grant-making)	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Listen to the VCS, and continually innovate to ensure that our grant policies and procedures are equitable and accessible for organisations that disproportionately experience barriers to accessing funding. → Provide advice and support to VCS organisations looking to apply for funding. → Ensure we have robust grant-making processes in place, which ensure funding reaches VCS organisations that are likely to achieve the greatest impact for local residents. → Share learning from our funded activities, to support improved systems-working, priority identification, and service delivery.
VCS Organisational Development	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Deliver VCS organisational support through training, 1:1 support, and brokering services, to develop the skills within the VCS workforce strengthening the sectors' resilience and furthering its ability to deliver against sustainability plans. → Provide support to the City & Hackney VCS with securing funding through training, 1:1 support, and by signposting to funding opportunities. → Support VCS organisations to form partnerships to develop partnership and consortia bids.

Directorate or Function	Activity
Health Transformation	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Demystify for the City & Hackney VCS, the City & Hackney place-based partnership, and North-East London Integrated Care System, furthering the sector's ability to engage. → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the VCS and the local health and care system partners, placing the voice of the VCS at the centre. We will facilitate this at a neighbourhood, City & Hackney placed-based, and North-East London level. → Gather and report impact data and use this to advocate for the VCS to be equitably and sustainably funded so that the sector can engage and deliver services as an equal partner within the City and Hackney placed-based partnership, and the North-East London Integrated Care System.
Young People & Families	<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene, facilitate, and promote direct dialogue and collaboration between the children, young people, and families VCS sector with local health and care system partners. → Serve as a strategic partner to the children, young people, and family's sector where the VCS sector requests, or permits us to do so.

Cross-cutting themes

1. Agile and Responsive

One of the key strengths of the VCS is its ability to be agile and responsive. This was never more evident than during recent crisis situations, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the Turkey and Syrian earthquake disasters. We recognise the importance of governance structures that enable and support agile and responsive working for our communities and staff team. We commit to actively listening and being emotionally aware of challenges that require a rapid response, working together across the organisation and with trustees to provide respectful and effective support to our members, partners, and residents. We understand the importance of IT and communications systems that foster collaboration across departments and allow us to work together seamlessly without silos. Our finance and grant-making processes which enable us to funnel resources to VCS organisations must be agile, even in times of crisis, and whilst we have made improvements, we know we must invest more to be more consistent and resilient to future crisis events. But we recognise systems and processes will only take us so far. Our ability to be agile and responsive is dependent on our staff having the skills and aptitude to work in this way. We will do everything possible to ensure our staff feel valued and have the support and training to provide the best possible service to our members and partners.

2. Being an Anti-racist organisation

As an organisation, we are committed to being anti-racist. When we say we are anti-racist, we mean that we actively identify and oppose racism in all its forms. We will continually evaluate, review, and refine our operational practices, ways of working, and people management practices to eradicate racism wherever it exists. We will regularly create spaces, systems, and times to talk, share experiences, and learn from each other, with an intersectional approach within EDI. These spaces will be led by Black and Global-Majority voices, and we will bring in expertise where it is lacking. We commit to an ongoing review of our progress and will transparently share our learning, including both successes and failures, to influence wider change. Our goal is to use what we learn to collaborate constructively with our partners and stakeholders to change policies, behaviours, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas, actions, and structural racism.



3. Approach to Collaboration and Partnership

No one agency or organisation can tackle City & Hackney's problems on their own – only by working together can we make City & Hackney a fairer place. A fundamental part of our role is to bring the VCS and public bodies together to work on common issues. We have a strong track record of creating delivery consortia of local VCS organisations to work in partnership around key themes - such as loneliness and social isolation of older people or youth unemployment. These collaborations make better use of scarce resources. We will only lead programmes when we have the consent of local VCS organisations to be contract brokers and ensure we don't compete with the sector in doing so. In selecting organisations to be our partners we will ensure our processes are open and transparent and where possible involve beneficiaries in helping us make decisions. Whenever possible we will share secured resources equitably and ensure we retain the principles of being a 'generous leader' which often means providing subsidies. We value trusting relationships with our partners and will ensure we embed strong governance arrangements and deliver clear and transparent communication. To achieve a step-change through collaboration and partnerships, we will drive innovation by encouraging new ideas that have the potential to deliver long-term and sustainable improvements to the health and wellbeing of local communities or that can tackle social injustices.



4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

As an organisation, we commit to actively seeking ways to diversify our teams and ensure that our recruitment policies and procedures are accessible to a wide pool of candidates that reflect the diverse City & Hackney community. We will create structures and mechanisms that encourage a broad range of views at all levels of the organisation so that our approach to work is informed by a variety of voices. We will also commit to the development of staff, regardless of their background, ability, gender identity or sexual orientation, to ensure they can thrive in their roles. Our communications and outreach will consider the accessibility needs of people with language barriers, and we will produce easy-read materials where appropriate. In our role as a convenor for the local VCS and our partners, we will ensure our spaces are inclusive and accessible for people with hearing and visual impairments and other access needs and will strive to reduce barriers that restrict access to smaller VCS organisations often led by and for Black & Global Majority communities. Additionally, we will make sure that our Hackney Giving grant application process and monitoring practices are accessible and proportionate.

5. Financially Resilient

Our commitment is to implement Full Cost Recovery Plus (FCR+) across all our programmes and contracts to support Hackney CVS's strategic objectives, ensuring that we only take on economically viable programmes and contracts. We will focus on multi-year programmes and contracts to support the provision of our work while diversifying our funder base to reduce any dependency on a single source of revenue. We aim to increase the percentage of self-generated income to ensure our financial sustainability. We will actively seek opportunities for significant growth, including mergers, partnerships, and SPVs while also exploring opportunities to contribute to the circular economy and the multiplier effect. Our goal is to continually strengthen our financial position to ensure we can continue to provide essential support to our community.



6. Environmentally Sustainable

By committing to sustainable practices, Hackney CVS will become a truly green organisation by 2028, with all processes and systems being 100% digital, except for where this may serve as a barrier to our members and partners. Our commitment extends to sourcing all products and services from local ethical and fair-trade providers and suppliers, while also effectively managing our utilities to reduce the use of energy, water, and heating throughout our organisation. Furthermore, we aim to encourage active travel options, such as walking, cycling, and running, to help reduce our carbon footprint and contribute to a healthier community amongst our staff and tenants.

Theory of Change

Assumptions?

Strategic Priorities

Inputs?

Outcomes

Statutory and voluntary sector working seamlessly together.

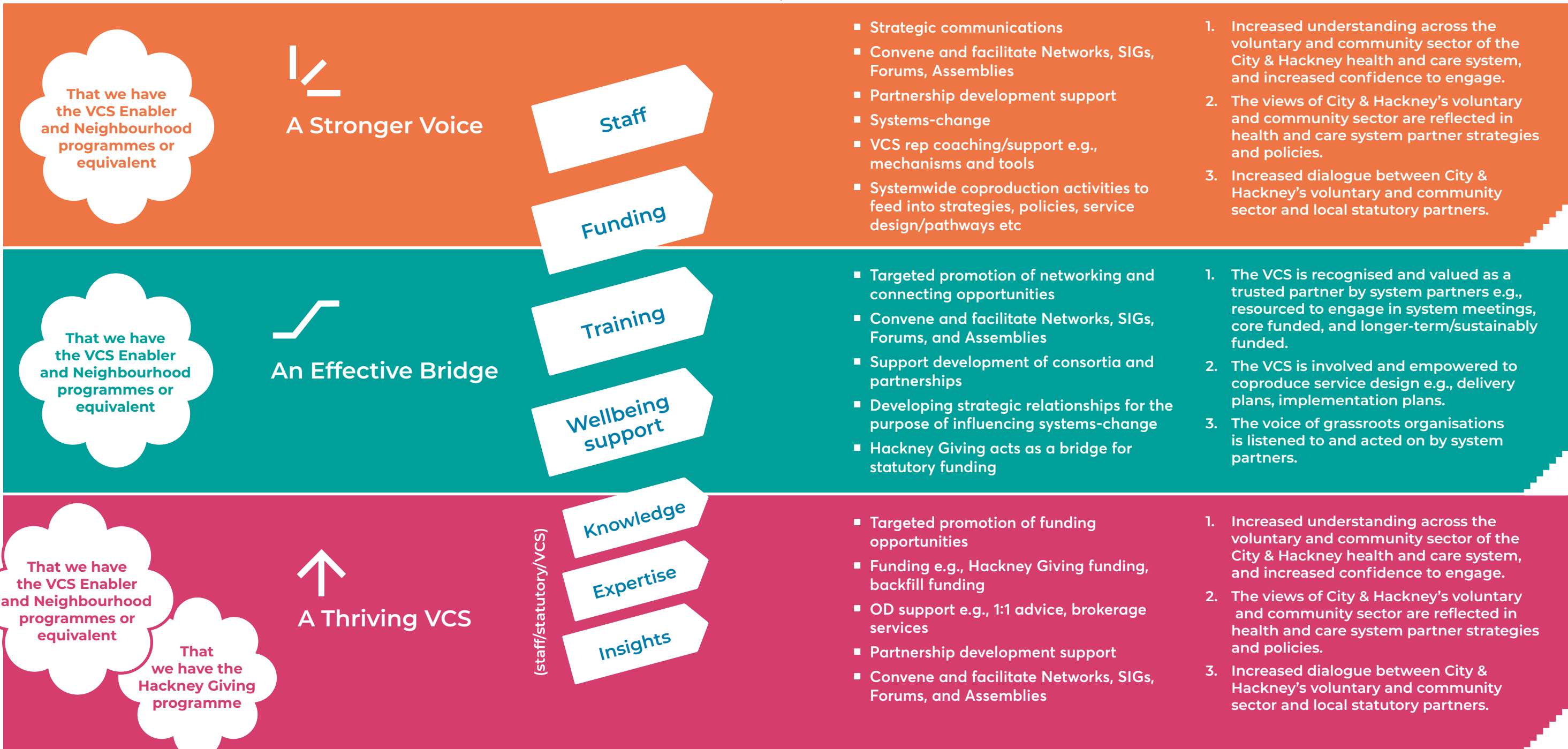
Service pathways include equitable inclusion of VCS partners.

Needs of communities, from the lens of the VCS, are evidenced in local strategies and policies.

Networks, Fora, and Special Interest Groups sufficiently resourced to provide collaboration and partnership opportunities.

Aggregated outputs (list of activities/services/policy work)

Medium-term outcomes





Strategic Alignment

To create a fairer society for City & Hackney residents, it's vital for the local VCS to work with local partners from the statutory, business, and the voluntary and community sector. As the local VCS infrastructure body, we see our role as ensuring that the VCS has a seat around decision-making tables to inform and influence local decisions that affect local communities.

There are several local anchor institutions and partnerships each with its own set of strategic priorities, which work together as part of the North East London Integrated Care System, Fig 1 and the City & Hackney local system, Fig 2.

This section sets out how we intend to ensure our programmes, services, and activities are aligned to local priorities, and how we intend to work with key partners to deliver our strategic goals and achieve our strategic outcomes.

Partnerships

National

1. National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)

NAVCA is the national membership body specifically for local sector support and development organisations (also known as local infrastructure) in England. As a member, we work with other CVSs/infrastructure bodies on national agendas affecting the voluntary and community sector. We will continue to amplify the voice of the sector so that NAVCA is able to use its position as a national body to influence positive change supporting our strategic goal for a thriving VCS.

Pan-London

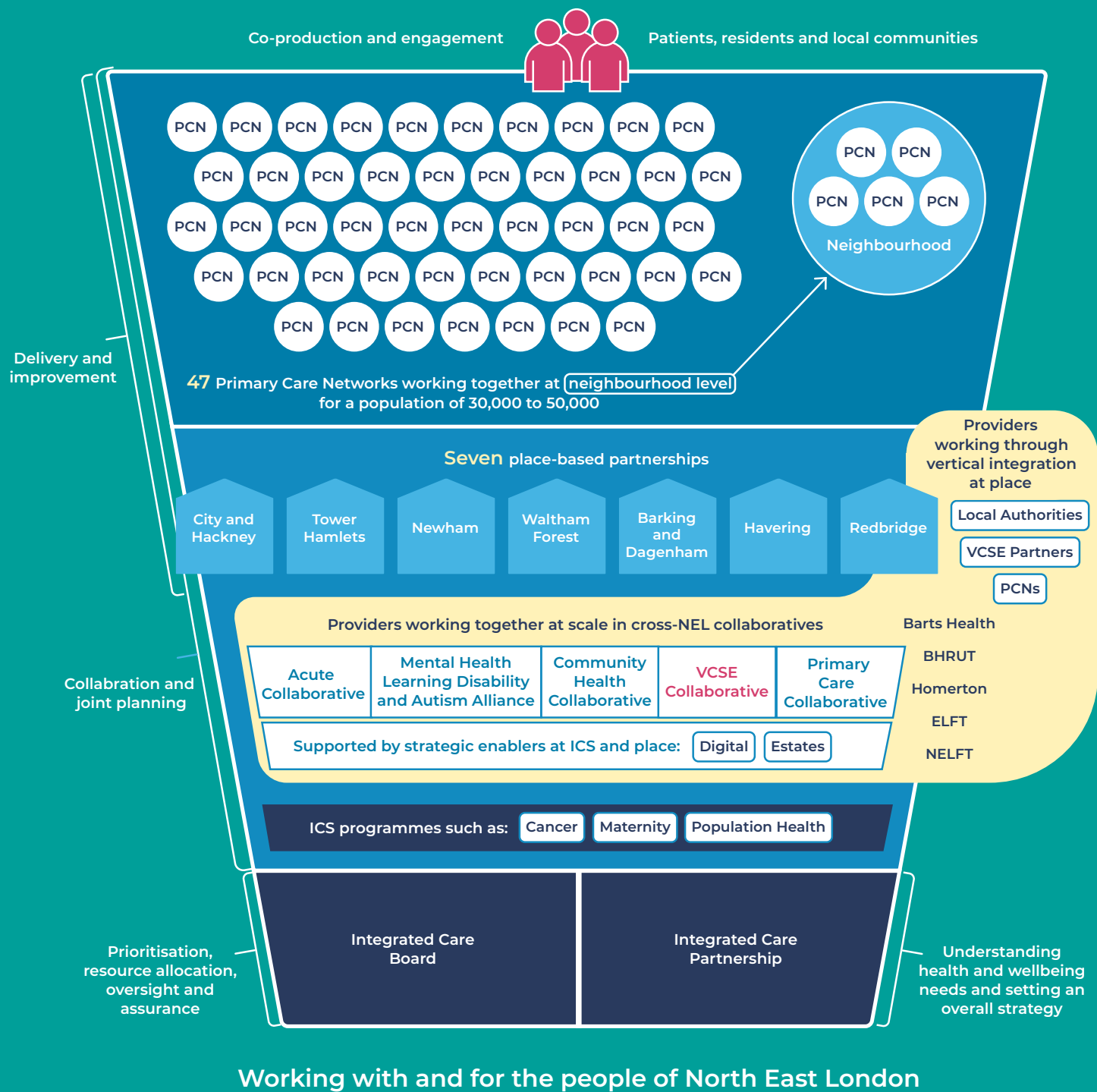
1. London Plus Network

London Plus provides support for charities and community groups across London and runs the London CVS Network, of which we are a member. Through our membership, we contribute towards pan-London agendas for the voluntary and community sector, specifically for local infrastructure bodies such as Hackney CVS. This serves as an important network for us to engage with other CVSs working across London to share and learn best practices, ensuring we are providing an equitable offer to our local VCS.

2. Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

The MPS provides police service to Londoners, with our local police service delivered by Central East BCU. As part of our involvement in the Community Safety Partnership, and specifically the Community Resilience Partnership, we work with community and statutory partners to ensure that the local police service works for the benefit of keeping local communities safe, which includes challenging issues that the community recognise as institutional racism. We know that young black men and boys are disproportionately reflected within the criminal justice system and are having their mental health affected by over-policing. We will continue to engage in this partnership to address this, as well as delivering youth-led programmes through our Young People & Families team that specifically seek to deliver racial justice around this agenda.

Fig 1: The North East London Integrated Care System



Sub-regional

1. North East London Integrated Care System (NEL ICS)

The North East London Health and Care Partnerships' ambition is to 'work with and for all the people in North East London to create meaningful improvements in health, wellbeing, and equity. It has agreed on four system priorities for improving quality and outcomes and tackling health inequalities, where joint action can create measurable change. These are:

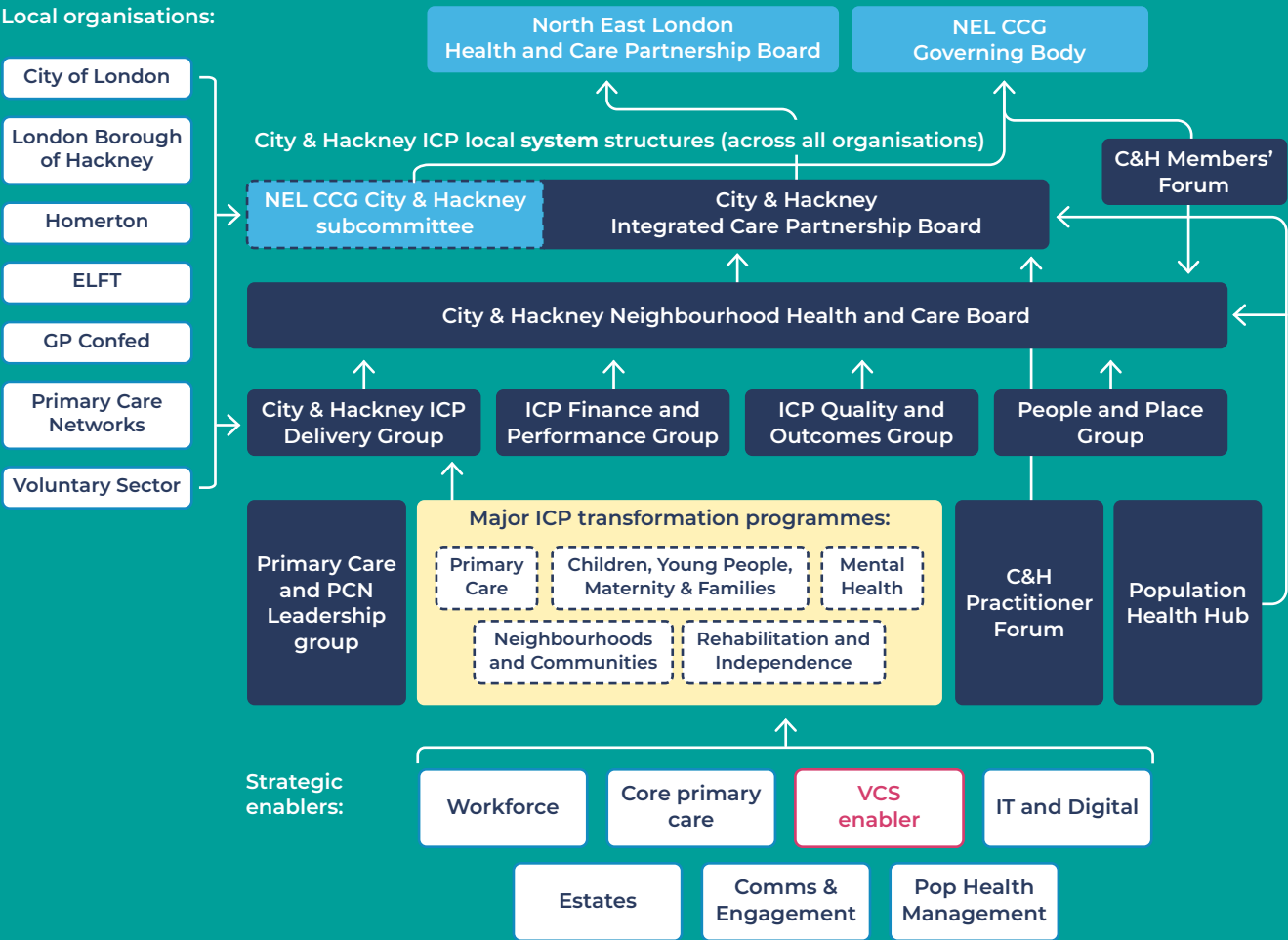
- 1. Employment and workforce**
to create meaningful work opportunities and employment for people in North East London, now and in the future.
- 2. Long-term conditions**
to support everyone living with a long-term condition in North East London to live a longer, healthier life and to work to prevent conditions occurring for other members of our community.
- 3. Children and young people**
to make North East London the best place to grow up, through early support when it is needed and the delivery of accessible and responsive services.
- 4. Mental health**
to transform accessibility to, experience of, and outcomes from mental health services and wellbeing support for the people of North East London.

The NEL ICS has 6 cross-cutting themes underpinning its approach to delivering against these priorities:

- Tackling Health Inequalities.
- Greater focus on Prevention.
- Holistic and Personalised Care.
- Coproduction with local people.
- Creating a High Trust Environment that supports integration and collaboration.
- Operating as a Learning System, driven by research and innovation.

The **North East London VCS Collaborative (NEL VCS Collaborative)** is the main route through which we will work to ensure that local City & Hackney's VCS can use its collective voice to help shape the design and delivery of services and care pathways under these priorities. As part of the NEL VCS Collaborative, Hackney CVS will work to ensure that the City & Hackney VCS is engaged in a meaningful, and equitable way. In the short-term, this means continuing our involvement in the development of the NEL VCS Collaborative, but over the next five years, this will mean supporting its evolution and using our voice to advocate for long-term sustainable financial investment, which supports the NEL VCS Collaborative to play an active role within the NEL ICS.

Fig 2: The City & Hackney local system



City & Hackney wide

1. City & Hackney Place-based partnership (C&H PBP)

The CH PBP brings together health and social care organisations who have committed to work together to support improved outcomes and reduce inequalities for our local population. It has three population health strategic focus areas:

1. Giving every child the best start in life.
2. Improving mental health and preventing mental ill-health.
3. Preventing and improving outcomes for people with long-term health and care needs.

Through our Health Transformation team we will ensure a bridge between the City & Hackney VCS and the wider C&H PBP to enable the VCS to use its collective voice to help shape the design and delivery of services and care pathways. Specifically, our Neighbourhood and VCS Enabler programmes will provide the structure and mechanisms for transformational development and delivery e.g., Children & Families Forum, Mental Health Special Interest Groups, Older People's Special Interest Group, Learning Disability Special Interest Group, and the Neighbourhood Forums, and we'll use our communication channels to target and reach relevant VCS colleagues to share information and promote opportunities to convene.

We will ensure that insights, intelligence, and evaluation evidence of programmes and activities delivered through our Health Transformation team, are used by VCS Leadership Group members attending system meetings. Also, our CEO serves as a representative on the City & Hackney Health & Care Board, and we will deliver strategic communications in this area.

i. City of London Corporation

The City of London's Corporate Strategic Plan 2023-2027 identifies the shared vision, mission, and priorities that will guide the City's next four years, reflecting the needs and expectations of the community.

The Plan sets out eight strategic areas of focus:

1. Reconciliation, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion.
2. Housing and Homelessness.
3. Wellbeing and Safety.
4. Safe London for Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse and Trans People.
5. Economic Growth, Culture, and Prosperity.
6. Mobility and Transportation.
7. Climate Action and Sustainable Growth.
8. Well-Run City.

Whilst we were established to service the needs of Hackney residents, developments in how health and care is provided has resulted in more working across boundaries and ensuring the join-up and integration of services. As a result, this means we include the City of London (City) as part of our remit. We are still developing our understanding of the unique needs of City residents, and the VCS that supports them, however, commit to working with the City of London Corporation to deliver its strategic areas of focus for community benefit.

Our Health Transformation, VCS Support, and Young People & Families teams will ensure our offer is made available to the City VCS, in as far as we are sufficiently resourced to be able to. We commit to furthering our relationship with City colleagues to better understand the needs of City communities.

ii. Hackney Council

Hackney Community Strategy 2018-28: This strategy sets out the Council's overarching vision for Hackney for the decade. It focuses on Hackney Council's work and what it needs to do to influence the national Government, the Mayor of London, the Greater London Authority, and other decision-makers.

The strategy has five cross-cutting themes and provides a set of correlating actions for Hackney Council, and what the Council will ask of residents, organisations, businesses to get involved with, and what it will need to ask the Government to do. It also sets out how it intends to work with local partners to make the best use of community networks and multi-agency partnerships.

The five cross-cutting themes are:

1. **A borough where everyone can enjoy a good quality of life and the whole community can benefit from growth.**
2. **A borough where residents and local businesses fulfil their potential and everyone enjoys the benefits of increased local prosperity and contributes to community life.**
3. **A greener and environmentally sustainable community which is prepared for the future.**
4. **An open, cohesive, safer and supportive community.**
5. **A borough with healthy, active and independent residents.**

Through our Health Transformation work, VCS Support team, and Young People and Families team, we'll ensure we support the VCS and residents to have a voice around these priorities. This will either be through direct support through funding or organisational development, or by ensuring that the VCS has a seat around decision-making tables, either by convening the discussion ourselves, or advocating for the VCS to be invited to discussions

convened by Hackney Council. We will ensure our intelligence, data, and insights can be used to inform discussions on these agendas and will work in partnership with the Council to deliver these shared priorities for local communities.

Hackney Council Strategic Plan – Working Together for a Better Hackney 2022-2026: The Plan sets out the ambitions of the Council for the four-year 2022-26 period, outlining the challenges it faces, and what it will need to do to respond, making clear it will need to coproduce with residents, the business community, public sector partners, and the VCS. The Plan is framed by Mayor of Hackney's priorities, and the 2022-26 Manifesto commitments of the elected Labour administration.

The Plan has three priorities:

1. **Working together... FOR A FAIRER, SAFER HACKNEY.**
2. **Working together... FOR A GREENER, HEALTHIER HACKNEY.**
3. **Working together... FOR EVERY CHILD IN HACKNEY.**

The Plan also notes the Council's approach to addressing inequality, which includes tackling structural racism, embedding an anti-racism approach, adopting a preventative approach, promoting prosperity and wellbeing, building strong and cohesive communities, and creating a diverse workforce.

There is strong alignment between what is outlined in the Plan, and our own strategic priorities, and cross-cutting themes. We enjoy a strong working relationship with Hackney Council, and as part of our own CCARE principles and behaviours, we commit to collaborating with the Council to deliver these changes for community benefit.

iii. Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

The Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Strategy 2023-2028, Our Future Together, sets out the Trust's vision and priorities for the next four years. The strategy has six strategic priorities:

1. **Improving the health & wellbeing of our communities.**
2. **Delivering outstanding, equitable care.**
3. **Develop happy, healthy and heard staff.**
4. **Strengthening partnerships.**
5. **Secure our future.**
6. **Foster innovation, improvement & learning.**

There is an obvious role for the VCS to play in helping people to improve their health and maintain their wellbeing. The VCS are experts in delivering equitable care that meets the needs of our richly diverse communities, often at the forefront of innovation.

As part of our strategy, we will provide a bridge for the VCS to have a voice around these priorities, ensuring that local communities are able to access seamless care pathways to services specifically tailored to meet their needs, in the community, closer to home.

iv. East London Foundation Trust (ELFT)

East London NHS Foundation Trust provides community health, mental health and primary care services to a population of around 1.8 million people across Bedfordshire, Luton, Richmond and East London. Its strategy considers the changing needs and assets within our local populations, and the impact of the pandemic on our shared communities, and commits to greater collaborative working between local health and social care and voluntary sector organisations.

The strategy has four strategic outcomes

1. **Improved population health.**
2. **Improved experience of care.**
3. **Improved staff experience.**
4. **Improved value.**

There is a strong alignment between outcomes 1 & 2, and the contribution the VCS makes to local communities. The VCS play a critical role in supporting people to build social capital by providing a network of support and building their resilience, which contributes towards people maintaining good health and wellbeing.

Through our Health Transformation team, we will ensure we provide an effective bridge between ELFT and local VCS organisations so that effective collaboration and coproduction can support improved service design, and delivery pathways, which are culturally appropriate, and provide improved care for local residents to manage the mental and physical wellbeing in their community.

v. City & Hackney GP Confederation / Primary Care Networks

The vision for the City & Hackney GP Confederation is to:

- Ensure local communities have access to the best quality local healthcare and services.
- Make a positive difference to the quality of primary care in City and Hackney.
- Influence, develop and redesign local services, as a collective voice for primary care in the local health and social care system.
- Operate as an open, honest, responsive organisation that works in partnership and collaboration with others.

Its purpose is to:

- Provide local, out-of-hospital and preventative services.
- Develop the capacity and capability of the local primary workforce.
- Deliver public health and health promotion.
- Research and innovation.

There is an obvious synergy between the vision and purpose of the City & Hackney GP Confederation, and that of the VCS, to provide access to the best quality of local healthcare and services, and by influencing the development the redesign of local services.

Through our Health Transformation team, we will create a bridge through our Neighbourhoods and our VCS Enabler programmes to the City & Hackney GP Confederation, via its Primary Care Networks, to ensure the VCS has a voice and is able to coproduce the design of services, and referral pathways, which ensure communities have access to high-quality services, close to home, tailored to meet their individual needs, and which are joined up.

vi. VCS Leadership Group

The VCS Leadership Group (VCSLG) was established by Hackney CVS to facilitate the City & Hackney VCS to serve as a partner within the City & Hackney placed-based partnership. The VCSLG's membership consists of chairs from each of the networks, forums, and special interest groups that function as part of the VCS Enabler infrastructure programme. It serves as a space for community needs to be discussed with senior leaders from across the VCS and for strategic actions to be coproduced to identify issues and/or emerging health inequalities.

The VCS Leadership Group strategy outlines the VCSLG's approach towards the following strategic priorities:

1. **Equity for the VCS.**
2. **Levers for Prevention.**
3. **Sustainability.**
4. **Data/digital integration.**
5. **Bringing the community voice to the system.**

Whilst the agenda is set and steered by the VCSLG, our role is as the facilitator and convenor. The VCSLG and the myriad of networks, forums, and special interest groups it oversees, provide space for the VCS to have a voice around local issues affecting local communities, and is core to our Stronger Voice strategic priority. The infrastructure it is providing creates a bridge across the VCS, and with wider partners within the City & Hackney placed-based partnership to collaborate around system priorities. It provides the structure that supports the sector to build social capital, building its resilience, and supporting the sector's future sustainability, allowing the VCS to thrive.

2. City & Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board

The role of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB) is to safeguard adults with care and support needs by assuring itself that there are local safeguarding arrangements in place and by preventing abuse and neglect.

The CHSAB is committed to stopping abuse and neglect where possible, to achieve this it strives to:

- Ensure that everyone, both individuals and organisations, are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and responses to abuse and neglect.
- Support the development of a positive learning environment across these partnerships, at all levels, to help break down cultures that are risk-averse or seek to scapegoat or blame practitioners.
- Ensure that Making Safeguarding Personal and the voice of the service user is considered through all aspects of our work.
- Respond effectively where safeguarding concerns are raised to ensure that these are addressed at an operational or strategic level.

Through our representation on the CHSAB we will ensure there is a feedback loop between the board and the VCS so that safeguarding issues and intelligence can be routinely shared with the Board. Through our Organisational Development team, we will support the VCS to develop robust safeguarding policies and encourage the take-up of safeguarding training through our networks, forums and communication channels. We will share Safeguarding Adults Reviews to ensure that learning can influence safeguarding improvements across the VCS.

We will ensure that we have robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place, that staff and our board are appropriately trained, to safeguard our staff, partners and communities, and act as an exemplar for the wider VCS.

3. City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP)

The CHSCP is committed to working together to make the lives of children safer by protecting them from harm; preventing impairment to their health and/or development, ensuring they receive safe and effective care; and ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for them to live in.

The CHSCP want to make sure that everyone who works with children across the City & Hackney has the protection of vulnerable children and young people at the heart of what they do. In practice, this means that children are seen, heard and helped:

- Seen; in the context of their lives at home, the adults involved in their lives, friendship circles, health, education, and public spaces (both offline and online).
- Heard; by professionals taking time to hear what children and young people are saying – putting themselves in their shoes and thinking about what their life might truly be like.
- Helped; by professionals remaining curious and by implementing timely, effective, and imaginative solutions that help make children and young people safer.

Through our representation on the CHSCP we will ensure there is a feedback loop between the board and the VCS so that safeguarding issues and intelligence can be routinely shared with the partnership. Through our Organisational Development team, we will support the VCS to develop robust safeguarding policies and encourage the take-up of safeguarding training through our networks, forums, and communication channels. We will share safeguarding case review learnings to influence safeguarding improvements across the VCS.

4. City of London joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2023-27

The City of London Health and Wellbeing Board provide collective leadership for the general advancement of the health and wellbeing of people within the City of London, by promoting the integration of health and social care services. Its priority is to address economic determinates to improve health quality for residents and workers in the City of London.

A draft version of the strategy provides the following outcomes:

- Strengthened community collaboration and partnership.
- Improved mental health.
- Improved physical health.
- Improved opportunities for City of London children to live longer lives in good health.

Through our representation on the HWB, we will create a bridge between activity being delivered through our health transformation programmes e.g., Mental Health SIG and the HWB so that the VCS is able to contribute to each of the four outcomes.

5. Community Safety Partnership / Community Resilience Partnership

The community safety partnership comprises the statutory officer group, the community resilience partnership (CRP) and 4 strategic boards responsible for delivering the priorities of the community safety plan.

The CRP works closely with the statutory officer group. Agendas are focused on the priorities of the community safety plan, tackling crime through preventative strategic work, and finding ways to address the underlying causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Through our representation on the CRP, we will ensure that community insights and intelligence, gathered through relevant networks and forums e.g., Faith Forum, Hackney Refugee & Migrant Forum, LGBTQ+ Special Interest Groups, Young People & Families Forum, continue to help shape activity. We will support the promotion of strategic communications which support community safety.

6. East London Business Association (ELBA)

ELBA brings about positive change in East London and beyond by connecting the public, private and voluntary sectors to create exciting possibilities.

ELBA delivers three programmes:

1. **Community Works** – supports businesses to bring their time, skills and expertise to support the local VCS.
2. **Education Works** – offers young people the opportunity to discover and develop new skills and competencies for education, training and career aspirations.
3. **Employment Works** – supports local people to find and secure employment opportunities.

We know one of the key issues facing the VCS is around workforce challenges. With burnout following three challenging years since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and now the cost-of-living crisis pushing many to move to secure higher-paid work to make ends meet, there is a role for ELBA in supporting the VCS to plug the gap with volunteers.

However, this offer needs to work for the true benefit of the VCS, to support the achievement of long-term goals. We will use our position to advocate that corporate volunteering programmes seek to deliver long-lasting change, rather than one-offers of support, which whilst meaning well, can often place a disproportionate burden on the VCS host organisation, with limited long-term gain. We'll look to do this by creating a bridge for the VCS to help inform what volunteer support would be most beneficial to them, and their communities to ensure an equitable and fair approach.

7. Hackney Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, 2022-26

The Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) is a partnership that works together to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Hackney and reduce health inequalities. The HWB has identified three priority areas for action:

1. **Improving mental health.**
2. **Increasing social connection.**
3. **Supporting greater financial security.**

The approach adopted by the HWB to address these priorities is to pursue the objectives set out in the Marmot Review 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' (2010), which involves looking at each priority and asking how we can:

- Give every child the best start in life (often by recognising the role of families).
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities.
- and have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.
- Ensure effective action is taken to address racism and other forms of discrimination.

Through our representation on the HWB, we will create a bridge between activity being delivered through our health transformation programmes e.g., Mental Health SIG and the HWB so that the VCS is able to contribute to each of the three priorities.

8. Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Strategy, 2015-25

We partnered with Hackney Council and other local agencies to coproduce with young people and parents an ambitious plan to improve the life chances for young black men. Young black men tend to fare worse than their peers in many ways, from poorer educational results to higher rates of offending.

The pandemic meant there was a loss of momentum and focus in delivering the intended ambitions to deliver this critical strategy. However, in partnership with Hackney Council, community partners, and young black men, a revised approach is being developed, one which broadens the remit to incorporate the needs of young black women.

Through representation on the YBM Accountability Board (name may change), and liaison with community and statutory partners, we will continue to help shape the forward direction for the strategy. Internally, through our own YBM programme (2022-25) funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, we will support young black people to direct and deliver key activities as part of our Youth Leadership Model, furthering their leadership and representation skills.

9. Neighbourhoods – City & Hackney Living Better Together

Across City & Hackney there are eight Neighbourhoods; Springfield Park, Hackney Downs, Hackney Marshes, Well Street Common, London Fields, Shoreditch Park & City, Clissold Park, and Woodberry Wetlands, to support placed-based integrated health and care. Hackney CVS works in partnership with Healthwatch Hackney, Volunteer Centre Hackney, and the centralised Neighbourhoods Team to deliver the City & Hackney Neighbourhoods

Through our Health Transformation team, we will convene eight Neighbourhood Forums, facilitated by VCS seconded facilitators, to support local VCS representatives to engage in meaningful dialogue with statutory health and care providers, and residents to provide a voice around neighbourhood priorities which address localised health inequalities. We will ensure there is a bridge between the Neighbourhoods Programme, and the VCS Enabler programme, by inviting Neighbourhood Forum chairs to join the VCS Leadership Group, which governs the work of the VCS Enabler programme.

10. Neighbourhoods Community Navigation Strategy, 2023-25

Community Navigation is an umbrella term used across City & Hackney to describe a wide range of local services and roles that provide 1:1 non-clinical person-centred support to residents, to improve wellbeing by addressing the wider determinants of health.

The strategy notes that 30 roles or services have been mapped across City & Hackney but acknowledges that there are many other VCS organisations and groups providing navigation.

The strategy sets out four priorities:

- Understanding the role of Community Navigation in addressing financial hardship and ensuring people in navigation roles feel confident supporting people around financial hardship.
- Maximising the impact of Community Navigation on addressing health inequalities in local communities and supporting City & Hackney residents who experience health inequalities.

- To ensure we have skilled navigators who feel supported and valued in their roles and can effectively work with one another within their Neighbourhoods.
- Grow the understanding of Community Navigation and of the different roles in City & Hackney amongst residents and staff.

We will ensure there is a bridge between VCS organisations, networks, forums, and the Community Navigation network. We will support the sector to use its voice to advocate for VCS referral and service delivery pathways and use our influencing levers to ensure that the VCS are equitably funded to serve as a partner to deliver this strategy, to ensure VCS organisations are not under undue pressure, and are able to thrive.

Where our partners want to collaborate and coproduce solutions with the VCS to deliver against their priorities, we will advocate for fair and equitable coproduction principles and working practices, which ensure the VCS is respected throughout.

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- Alice Haworth-Booth who designed our strategy to ensure we can easily engage our stakeholders and partners in our work.

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