COMMUNITY WELLBEING SERVICE

IMPACT REPORT

January 2025 - June 2026



"I made this place my home"

Sufra FIGHT POVERTY LOVE COMMUNITY

Brent

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Summary

Over its first 18 months, the Community Wellbeing Service (CWS) has become a vital local space for Brent residents, supporting **766 households (3,061 residents in total)**. The service has delivered extensive practical support, including **8,406 food shops**, **13,172 daytime meals**, **14,465 evening meals**, and **806 referrals to other services**. This has enabled members to access food, advice, wellbeing activities and specialist support in a single welcoming and dignified environment.

The CWS has also **strengthened community connection**. It has hosted 142 wellbeing sessions with 1,556 attendances, enabled 2,623 interactions with partner organisations, supported 28 members to become volunteers, and generated 7,673 volunteer hours.

Through partnerships, volunteering pathways, advice, food provision and inclusive community activities, **the service has created a trusted space where people can reduce isolation**, build confidence, access opportunities and feel part of their local community.

The impact is evident across a range of indicators: financial resilience, wellbeing, access to local support, affordable food and employability. **Members reported improved confidence in managing money**, with those able to regularly save rising from 19% to 41%, and those feeling in control of their financial situation increasing from 34% to 46%.

Difficulties paying for food, bills, rent and clothing reduced significantly by the end of membership, while knowledge of free local support services rose from 52% to 70%. Members also reported improved wellbeing, with 40% saying their physical wellbeing had improved and 51% reporting improved mental wellbeing.







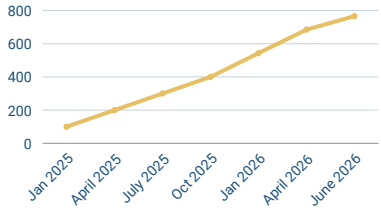
Community Wellbeing Service

The Community Wellbeing Service (CWS) is a holistic service that offers membership for Brent families. For £4/week members have access to a range of support including a Community Shop, Community Café and evening Kitchen service, Advice support, alongside Health and Wellbeing activities. Unlike the Food Bank, this project is not a crisis or emergency service. The service provides preventative support for local families and enables members to access a wide range of support under one roof, in order to build financial and personal resilience.



Our Members

In the first 18 months of service at New Horizons, the Community Wellbeing Service registered **766 households**, representing **3,061 Brent residents**, including the entire household that accesses the membership. Eligibility criteria requires all member-households to have children under 18 (or under 25 if they have SEN), be in receipt of means tested benefits, and be a Brent resident.

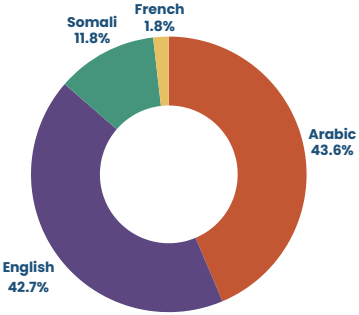


Members have enrolled steadily over 18 months

Religion

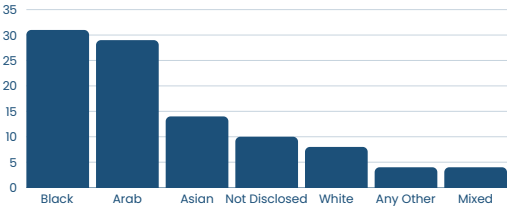
- 69% of members are Muslim
- 20% are Christian
- 5% prefer not to say.

21 Languages Spoken

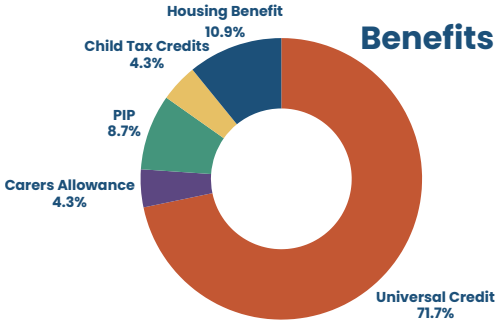




Ethnicity

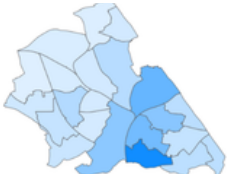


Benefits



Residence

Our members are from all wards of Brent. Representative of the levels of deprivation and poverty within the borough, we have the most members from Harlesden and Kensal Green, Stonebridge, Dollis Hill and Roundwood.



Impact areas

1. Greater financial resilience
2. Improved physical and mental wellbeing
3. Improved knowledge of an ability to access local specialist support services
4. Improved access to affordable food and other essentials
5. Increased employability and work readiness

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each member completes a Baseline Survey when they join the membership. This allows us to gauge their starting point and ask questions that relate to all five impact areas. Similarly, all members are encouraged to complete an End of Membership Survey, with questions that track the impact of the service.

The following results compare 735 Baseline Surveys and 276 End of Membership Surveys.



Impact in Numbers



766 households registered, equal to 3061 household members

8,406 food shops at the Community Shop

13,172 meals served through the Community Café

14,465 meals through the Community Kitchen

1,556 attendances at wellbeing activities

2,623 attendances at workshops and advice activities

7,673 hours volunteered across the service

12 work experience students hosted for placements

227 volunteers dedicating their time to the service

634 appointments with a Sufra advisor

28 members, doing Sufra volunteering to upskill and build their CV

£186,760 worth of produce saved from landfill










1. Greater Financial Resilience

- **634 Advice appointments** with Sufra advisors on:

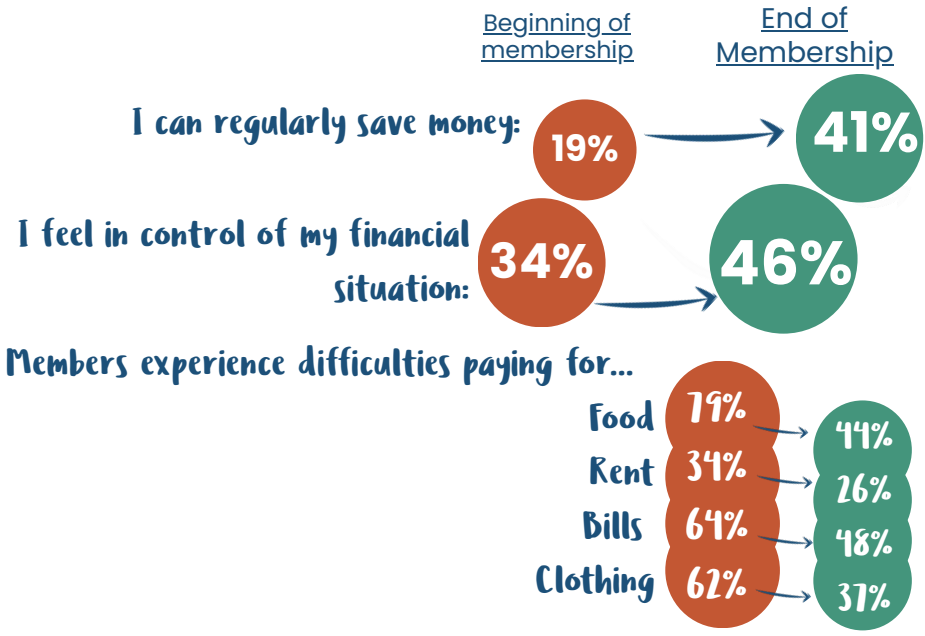
o Universal Credit, PIP, Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit
o Benefit checks to maximise member income
o Supporting with debt such as rent and utility arrears
o Applying for grants and utility schemes such as WaterSure
o Supporting with house issues, such as unsuitable accommodation, disrepair and threat of homelessness.

- **806 drop-in appointments** with co-located Brent Hubs advisors:

o Council tax arrears and housing benefit claims
o Money management and debt advice
o Welfare benefits issues

- **11 family slow cookers** were distributed to members as part of the holistic offer, alongside advice and signposting around energy usage, and managing bills.

- **86 Little Village Bundles** (including toys, clothes, toiletries, and other essentials for under 5s) were distributed as part of the partnership to support all families with under 5s (including pregnant guests).



2. Improved Physical & Mental Wellbeing

Adult Mindfulness

- 1,556 attendances to Wellbeing workshops, where members have been encouraged to take part in mindful activities, often culturally themed. These have included Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Refugee Week, Mother's Day and more.
- We host multiple volunteer led sessions including Arts and Crafts with Nancy, Crochet with Lakshmi, and Boardgames with Sukaina.
- There has been 'Brave New Words' and 'Reconnecting with Rhythms of Seasons' creative writing workshops for Refugee Week.

"Having people to talk to, adult company and conversation, being mum means you're talking with children all the time."

Children's activities during each school holiday

- Nature Craft and Calm sessions with Coco.
- Eat the Rainbow sessions with Chloe, where young people learn the benefits of eating a range of colours, all while learning to cook.
- Flying Seagulls sessions, which are circus activities for all ages.
- During term-time there are also a range of activities for under 5s including, Play and Learn sessions run by Brent Children and Family Information services, Rhyme Time with Tyan and sessions by Brent Libraries running arts and crafts and creative play.





Health initiatives

- Regular visits from Brent Health Matters, educating on topics such as asthma, diabetes, the benefits of walking, healthy eating etc.
- Clinical teams have set up in the space, carrying out Blood Pressure Checks, weight management advice, and diabetes and blood sugar information.
- Brent Infant Oral Health Team have visited twice, conducting dental checks for children between 0 – 16.
- Brent Infant Feeding specialists visit speaking with new mums and sharing information, resources and support on breast feeding.
- Our menus reflect our commitment to healthy eating, with at least 2 vegetarian services per week.

40% **agree that they have improved physical wellbeing since accessing the service**

51% **agree they have improved mental wellbeing since accessing the service**

"I didn't go anywhere before, I was depressed and stuck in my room. I made this place my home."



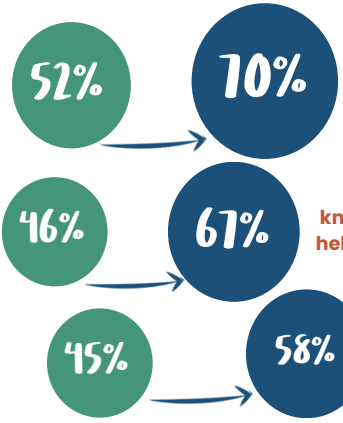


3. Improved Knowledge of & Ability to Access Local Specialist Support Services

- **2,623 interactions with partners in the space, including:**

Synergy
Brent Health Matters
Children and Family Service
Shaw Trust
Brent Libraries
NHS Community Connectors
Harlesden Community Club
Brent Works
OCS
Family Wellbeing Centres
Brent Cycling Programme
Home start

"I got advice like help with organising paying my bills, applying for a Freedom Pass (which I didn't know I was entitled to) and help applying for PIP which is too complicated for me. Where else can you get all this support?"



know there are free services that they can access in the area that help with a range of issues

know who to speak to or how to contact the people who can help with a range of issues

know what financial support they are entitled to and how to access it





4. Improved Access to Affordable Food & Other Essentials

- 8,406 shops have been carried out, each time with members taking home £35+ worth of fruit and veg, cupboard staples, hygiene products and cleaning supplies.
- 13,172 servings through the café, where soup is served daily, alongside a variety of surplus produce (often bread, cakes, pastries and fruit) and a nutritous and delicious lunch.

"Being able to save money using the membership means that I am able to purchase other essential things for my kids"

53% → 43% **have to regularly skip meals**

the number of households spending £150+ on food reduced: 27% → 16%



"Shops want you to eat healthy and tempt with offers on crisps but healthier options like fruit are too expensive, shopping here has helped with that. Shopping has helped with cooking fresh rather than frozen."

5. Increased Employability & Work Readiness

- **1 Digital Skills Workshops** run with 12 members, working on Internet and smartphone basics, laptops provided during the session.
- **7 volunteers and members mentored** by OCS (a building management company) in preparation for interviews, and 1 was offered a job as a result.
- **Shaw Trust registered 5 CWS members to the Connect to Work Programme**. Of these, 1 member has now successfully moved into paid employment, while several others have become volunteers, gaining crucial experience. 1 Shaw Trust participant has become a workshop facilitator.
- **4 volunteers now carry out paid work as facilitators** at the CWS, running a range of workshops as part of the holistic offer.
- **14 core volunteers** are completing their **Food Hygiene Level 2 Certification**.





ESOL and Coffee Morning

While many of our members are looking for work, one of the biggest barriers is proficiency in English. For guests who are new to the language, we run weekly conversational English classes followed by a Coffee Morning, always with a wellbeing focus.

- 38 ESOL classes with 435 attendances.
- Coffee Morning activities have included sessions on women's health, pottery painting, making Diwali suncatchers, crosstitch and more.

31% **feel they are in a better employment position now due to the membership**

30% → **58%** **know who to approach for employment support**

Volunteering

Our volunteers are at the heart of every element of the service. **227 volunteers have contributed 7,673 hours** at the CWS in 18 months.






Pathway Volunteers carry out in-depth triage. **Kitchen Volunteers** make lunches and dinners, working with surplusto be creative with menus. **Café Assistants** greet members with a smile and serve tea, coffee and lunch. **Storeroom Volunteers** organise deliveries and keep the shop well stocked, while **Shop Volunteers** serve members, take payment and provide a dignified and welcoming shopping experience.

- On average each week, we have **45 volunteers across the service**.
- During this period, **28 CWS members transitioned to become core volunteers**.
- All CWS Volunteers undergo **Core Training**, which includes Safeguarding, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Food Hygiene & Manual Handling.
- Volunteers have been encouraged to join our **Steering Group**. Two CWS volunteers, **Nancy and Farhio**, have become **Chair and Co-Chair**.
- We hosted **27 corporate groups** from local and national companies, such as Arcus Infrastructure, Amazon, HS2 and JP Morgan. These opportunities strengthen our partnerships with local businesses and keep the project linked to the wider community.

CWS Volunteers from 2025 Annual Volunteer Survey

Volunteers that agree or strongly agree:

- feel better connected with their local community — **94%**
- feel confident in meeting new people — **93%**
- Have been able to develop skills and confidence to work in a team — **82%**
- feel supported with access to additional training e.g. first aid, wellbeing, cooking skills — **82%**
- have been able to develop the ability to work under pressure — **65%**

Community Kitchen



Our Community Kitchen opens its doors **3 nights a week** to the whole community. **Everyone is welcome**. Our guests come from a range of demographics, many live locally, some are families who access the day-time memberships and others who have come alone and made friendships during the evenings.

- **14,465 delicious and nutritious three course meals served** in a dignified and restaurant-style service. Our volunteers provide table service, which is integral to the ethos of the service. Our guests don't feel they are receiving charity, but that they are part of a community.

- Each month we spotlight and celebrate a different **cultural event** including themed menus, decorations and information sharing. We have celebrated **Remembrance Day, Diwali, Eid, Hannukah, Pancake Day, St Patricks, Pride** and much more.



Member Spotlight: Sita

Sita was introduced to the CWS by a friend. Living in a busy, intergenerational household with her partner, children, and grandchildren, she felt entirely overwhelmed by mounting bills, family pressures and growing health concerns.

During her initial visit, Sita shared these worries with our Pathway Volunteer, who booked her an appointment with our Advisor to apply for a Personal Independence payment (PIP). Following a lengthy, multi-appointment process, her application was successful. This crucial new income now supports her health needs and eases the financial strain on her family. She was also assisted with registering as deaf and connected to Brent Hubs for housing benefit support.

Today, the CWS has become Sita's sanctuary. Even though her six-month membership has ended, she continues to visit every week without fail, using the environment as a safe, relaxing escape.

"I was stuck in the house all day before. After being injured and not being able to work, come to a place like this has helped a lot. The people are lovely and nice; it has taken away a lot of stress."



Member Spotlight: Angela

Angela used to work for the council but had to step away to cover childcare for her five children, including one with additional needs. She first heard about the service through word of mouth from a friend at her children's school. Since joining, she has referred many other friends to us.

All five of her children have attended workshops, health clinics, and play sessions – and all thoroughly enjoy them! One of her sons has global developmental delay and particularly benefits from spending time in this familiar environment each week.

She enjoys spending time with friends and neighbours. She doesn't necessarily come to Sufra just to eat, but rather to connect with others and enjoy the atmosphere; the food is a bonus. She feels deeply grateful for having access to a "third space".

"This service has been amazing; it's helped me reconnect with the community. It's warm and inviting, and somewhere I can gather my thoughts after the morning school rush."



Volunteer Spotlight: Idris

“A friend of mine who has been volunteering at Sufra for many years asked me if I could help with the garden pond construction.

Upon arriving, I learnt and experienced all the incredible things Sufra does and I wanted to get more involved. That's when I met the passionate staff at the kitchen and café and started there.

I firmly believe that Sufra helped me mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Cooking, feeding and helping those who need it, bought me a sense of peace and fulfilment.

I have also picked up some important skills like cooking, running a café, understanding and implementing strict food hygiene and standards.

Soft skills like how to listen, connect, empathise and be present. I am currently using these skills in my current job from organising, punctuality, empathy and much more.

Volunteering at Sufra helped me structure my days where I'm able to help those in need. The work helped my understand people I meet, and how to signpost them to the right places.”





CWS IMPACT REPORT

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