



HEAR US CROYDON

A Voice for Change in Mental Health



IMPACT REPORT 2024/25

Lived Experience Leading Change

CROYDON'S MENTAL HEALTH

PEER SUPPORT GROUP

CHARITY # 1135535

COMPANY # 06891337



Our Vision:
For people with mental ill health to have the support needed to thrive, and an end to restrictive and coercive healthcare practices

Our Mission:
To empower people with mental ill health, drive systemic change, based on real experiences, and challenge negative perceptions associated with mental illness, stamping out stigma and discrimination

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Hear Us developed from a service user run community group established in 1992. Since 4th October 2001 Hear Us has been running as a not for profit organisation in Croydon and on 15th April 2010 the Management Committee registered Hear Us with the Charity Commission for charity status (No. 1135535) to give Hear Us a more independent and stronger voice in the community.

Management: The constitution in the original form was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on the 27th May 2004. Amendments to the constitution were adopted by resolution at the EGM held on 1st July 2008.

The Management Committee are the Board of Trustees. They include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer, Tim Oldham. The Committee has the power to co-opt members, as and when they deem it necessary. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the day to day running of Hear Us and have a responsibility to report to the funders, charity commission and other stakeholders whenever the need arises.

Trustees: Abeline Greene, Jacqueline Ashton, Cassandra Austin, Josh Baker Mendoza, Charlotte Goreing, Halimah Zakiuddin, Niall McVeigh & Luke Russell

Reserves Policy: Hear Us endeavours to maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months costs at all times. For the financial year 2026/26 this will be approximately £230,000. This is held in bank accounts with easy withdrawal facilities.

Statement of compliance: Financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Objectives and activities:
To relieve the needs of people living in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas who have mental health problems by provision of services and advice. To advance education about mental health for public benefit in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas with the object of creating awareness and reducing the stigma attached to mental health.

HEAR US ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

CHARITY # 1135535 - COMPANY # 06891337

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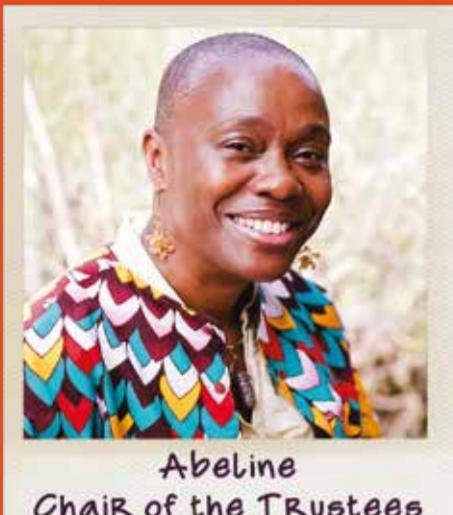
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



**MINDFUL
EMPLOYER**



CHAIR OF HEAR US STATEMENT



Abeline
Chair of the Trustees

This year has been one of both challenge and resilience. As Chair of Hear Us, I've witnessed firsthand the extraordinary dedication of our staff, volunteers, and trustees in navigating a difficult financial landscape while continuing to deliver impactful work across our community.

Securing funding has been a central focus, and I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Eleanor, Claire, David, and Tim in preparing and submitting bids—particularly the successful five-year National Lottery

application, which was confirmed at the time of writing. Their work, along with the support of the wider team, has ensured the continuation of vital services and brought renewed confidence to our organisation.

I also want to recognise the contribution of our trustees, especially those who joined us this year—Alima, Luke, and Charlotte. Their fresh perspectives and commitment have strengthened our governance and helped guide Hear Us through uncertain times. Charlotte recently shared:

“Being a trustee gives me a sense of purpose beyond my everyday work — it challenges me to think differently, learn from inspiring people, and contribute to something that genuinely matters. In return, I give my experience, my energy, and my commitment to help a cause I believe in thrive.”

— Charlotte, Trustee

This year, we've also focused on empowering our volunteers, particularly our Linkworkers, through training in areas such as boundaries and cultural awareness. These initiatives not only support our projects but also build confidence and skills that can lead to future employment opportunities.

Hear Us continues to be a space of growth, support, and transformation. Whether through the Maudsley Psychosis Project, Adobe funding, or community initiatives like food voucher distribution via CVA, our work remains rooted in compassion and collaboration.

Thank you to everyone—staff, trustees, volunteers, and funders—for your unwavering belief in our mission. Your contributions make Hear Us not just a charity, but a community of hope and progress.

Warm regards,

Abbi Greene Chair, Hear Us

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



Tim
Chief Executive

Hear Us is a Croydon-based charity and the only local project for people with mental ill health that is led and run by individuals with lived experience. We provide specialist peer support to people with complex mental health needs who live or work in the London Borough of Croydon.

Our practical, regular activities are designed to help individuals manage daily life more effectively, while also addressing their social, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

By drawing on lived experience, we offer empathetic, informed support that empowers people to feel heard, understood, and connected.

Hear Us has been built by a highly passionate team committed to ensuring fair access to financial, health, and social inclusion support for people with mental illness in Croydon. As a lived-experience-led charity, we actively challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices, as well as the negative perceptions often associated with mental ill health. Through our peer-led support, we work to reduce stigma and discrimination, empowering individuals to live with dignity, autonomy, and hope.

Organisational Development Over the past year, our Senior Management Team (SMT) has been focused on strengthening the charity's long-term sustainability. A key priority has been securing additional funding to support our staff and ensure the continued delivery of our vital services over the next five years.

We've also made significant progress in governance development, culminating in the completion of our Sustainability Business Plan. This was developed with expert support from Cranfield Trust and funded by the National Lottery.

In June 2024, we were proud to be awarded the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation for the second time, a testament to the quality and consistency of our services. This achievement reflects the dedication of our SMT and wider team in maintaining high standards across the organisation.

Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) Hear Us continues to respond to the evolving needs of Croydon's mental health community by developing and delivering services that are shaped by lived experience. Over the past few years, we have focused on building a professional, accredited WRAP - a vital service that supports people with complex mental health needs to access the financial support they are entitled to.

WRAP operates within clear capacity boundaries to ensure our advisors can provide high-quality, focused support. The project specialises in welfare benefits such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and the migration from Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) to Universal Credit. Our advisors also help to put food on the table, access mobility schemes, and maintain social

connections - reducing isolation and preventing over-reliance on statutory services.

In this financial year alone, WRAP has secured over £2 million in benefits for our clients, supporting them over the next three years and making a significant impact across the borough of Croydon.

New projects and funding success ensures Hear Us continues to evolve in response to the needs of Croydon's mental health community. We're excited to announce newly secured funding from London Community Foundation and Adobe, which will enable us to deliver art workshops that empower our members to express their lived experiences creatively. These workshops will provide a safe and inspiring space for self-expression, healing, and connection.

Looking ahead & moving forward, Hear Us remains committed to developing and delivering services that are shaped by the voices of Croydon's mental health community. We will continue to listen, respond, and innovate - ensuring our work reflects the real needs and lived experiences of those we support.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to The National Lottery Community Fund and City Bridge Foundation for their generous support of our Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP). Their funding has enabled us to continue delivering this much-needed service, which is now fully funded to operate for a further five years - providing vital financial peer support to those who need it most.

We report all our project outcomes to funders and share our findings with the South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) and senior stakeholders across Croydon. We have continued to contribute and represent the voice of Croydon's mental health community in the development, planning, and commissioning of mental health services.

Tim Oldham Chief Executive Officer

DEPUTY CEO STATEMENT

In my role as Deputy CEO, I continue to have the privilege of working across all of the projects that Hear Us delivers, and alongside every member of our talented and passionate team. I am continually inspired by the dedication, creativity, and compassion our staff show every day to ensure Hear Us provides meaningful, high-quality support for our community.

This year we have welcomed several new volunteers — Lee, Sajil, and Rose — who have joined our Reachout



Claire Hawkes
Deputy CEO

Create workshops, bringing wonderful skills, energy, and lived experience to our creative sessions (thanks May!) Following the refresh of our Volunteering Handbook and related policies last year, it has been rewarding to see new people getting involved and helping shape these projects. As someone who began my own journey with Hear Us as a volunteer, I know first-hand the difference volunteering can make, and I remain deeply grateful to our existing team for their commitment and generosity.

A real highlight of the year was holding our first Staff Development Day since 2019, which gave everyone a chance to reconnect, share ideas, and get to know one another. One memorable session, Sam's Journey—created by Amy—took us through the experience of a fictional service user and sparked valuable reflection on how each of our projects contributes to the Hear Us mission.

We have also been focusing on the future direction and sustainability of Hear Us. With support from an external consultant, we held a series of team workshops exploring how we can strengthen our impact and plan for long-term development. These discussions came together in an All-Staff Plenary, where we celebrated our shared purpose and explored our emerging Mission, Vision and Values.

We were proud to sign up to Croydon Council's George Floyd Pledge, reaffirming our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion across all areas of our work. While Croydon's Pride was sadly cancelled this year, we hope to see its return in 2025, and we look forward to being part of it once again.

Another highlight was being recognised by Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) as a Trusted Partner, through which Hear Us received £2,000 in vouchers to distribute to people most in need. May and I were delighted to attend a Chinese gifting ceremony at the David Lean Cinema to receive this recognition on behalf of the charity.

Finally, after many requests from staff at Croydon University Hospital, our Linkworkers returned to the Psychiatric Liaison service over the summer — a positive step in rebuilding this important partnership and ensuring that the voices of service users continue to be heard where it matters most.

Claire Hawkes - Deputy CEO



Hear Us Staff Development Day

WELFARE RIGHTS ADVICE PROJECT (WRAP)

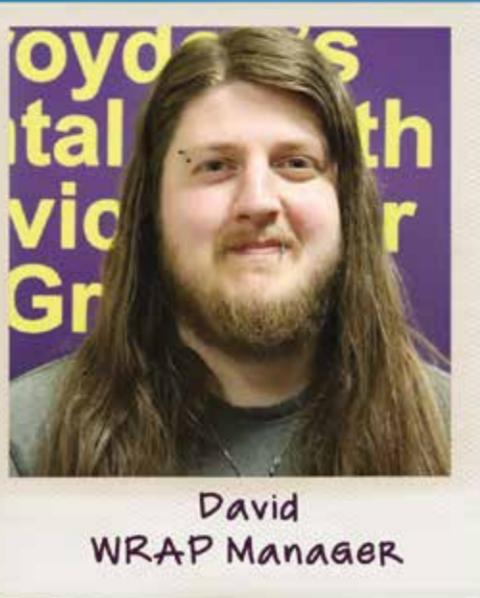
This past year, the Hear Us Welfare Rights Advice Project has felt busier than ever as we continue to help those affected by mental illness in the London Borough of Croydon to navigate a complex Welfare Benefits system and secure their entitlements.

It has been said that the only constant in life is change and the past year has seen the start of a process that will bring a frightening change for many: the migration of certain 'legacy benefits' to Universal Credit. As part of this migration process, anyone in receipt of Income support, Working Tax Credits, Child tax credits, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income related Employment and Support Allowance and Housing benefit (or any combination of the above) has or will be sent a Migration notice asking them to claim Universal Credit as their legacy benefits will stop.

Universal Credit is a drastic change from what many people are used to with an online claim and account and visits to the jobcentre to prove your identity. Hear Us has already assisted many to successfully make this change and navigate the many pitfalls in the process, and we will continue to do so into the future.

This year has also seen more of the same as we have continued to assist many to make claims and challenge decisions on their entitlement to PIP, including representing at appeals where needed. I am proud to say we have been overwhelmingly successful in this work and we have maximised the income of many households in need through our work.

In March of this financial year, the government posed another challenge to



David
WRAP Manager



Shellie
WRAP Senior Advisor



Barbra
WRAP Advisor

those reliant on disability benefits with the release of their green paper: *Pathways to work: reforming benefits and support to get Britain Working*.

This paper proposed many changes, the most concerning of which being making the PIP criteria stricter by introducing a ‘four point rule’ which would see many people, who would otherwise be eligible, refused PIP and many who already get PIP lose it at review.

As we have in the past, Hear Us will join with other organisations to speak for those with disabilities and fight against harmful changes that will make life more difficult and take money out of the pockets of those for whom life is already more expensive due to being disabled.



Bryony
WRAP Advisor

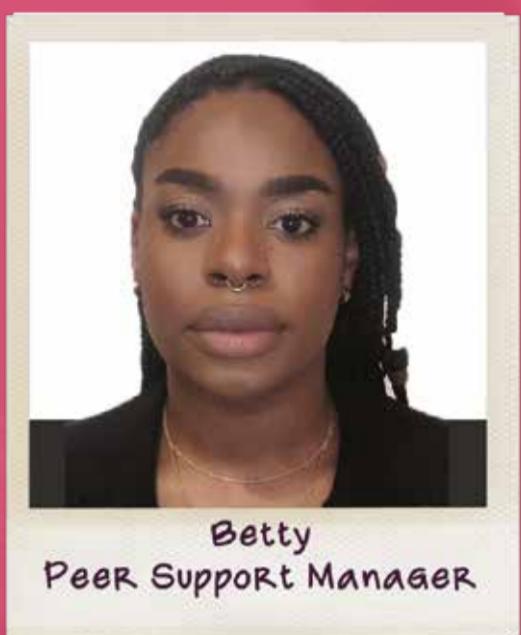
Thank you to everyone who makes this project as brilliant as it is, my staff Shellie and Barbra, and our Volunteer Bryony.

The Hear Us senior management team Claire, Eleanor and Tim, my other colleagues at Hear Us, Al, Amy, Betty and May and our funders National Lottery and City Bridge Foundation, without whom this valuable work would not be possible.

David Ashton

Welfare Rights Advice Project Manager

LINKWORKING PROJECT



Betty
Peer Support Manager

A massive thank you to the dedicated Linkworkers. Their incredible hard work and generosity makes a real difference in the lives of those served on a weekly basis. Hear Us is truly grateful for the time and commitment that the Linkworkers have put in in the last year to improving services. Something in particular to note, Linkworkers have been instrumental in the introduction of activity coordinators on every ward at the Bethlem. This is something they have championed for and at the beginning of 2025, a new cohort of activity coordinators were recruited. Since then, service users have reported 'feeling more positive' because they are receiving more 1-2-1 support; they feel they can rely on the consistency of the activity coordinators and have found they engage more due to the exciting activities being introduced weekly. These activities include growing their own produce, boxing, cooking but often change to reflect the needs of the service users at the time. Even though SLaM have a long way to go, little changes like this are instrumental in positively impacting the general experience of those currently engaging with services. This is just one of the ways that the Linkwork project plays a part in service users' recovery journey but it also helps form a bridge for those who have become disengaged with traditional support systems to re-connect. In turn, the project continues to provide a sense of purpose to the actual Linkworkers who can utilise their experience to help shape and improve the journey of others.

Betty Nassiwa
Peer Support Coordinator
Email: linkworking@hear-us.org



Claire, Betty & Tim at a SLaM Event

I joined Hear Us initially as part of the Reachout Challenge, which really helped me to stop feeling shame about my mental health. Getting involved in this helped reduce my anxiety about leaving the house and it improved my self-esteem as I realised that I was respected, when I shared my personal journey about mental health. I felt very comfortable and accepted too with my co-workers. Further down the line, I decided to become a Linkworker and this meant that I would actually be rewarded for my time.

For so long I felt people looked down on me because I did not work but now I felt proud to say that I had a job. Being part of the working world is so empowering and I finally feel that I am part of society instead of feeling isolated and useless. Being a Linkworker is very rewarding as I can meaningfully contribute to the wellbeing of others who suffer from mental health issues. Listening and accepting people who are confused and in a crisis is something that has given me so much confidence in myself that I have since gone on to complete a counselling course. I particularly enjoy working with the other Linkworkers. Being part of Hear Us has really changed my life for the better and I am so very grateful.

Linkworker (& Reachout Volunteer)

Helpful
Listened
Enjoyed
Informed
Benefit
Useful
Confidence
Seen
Appreciated
Reassured
Encouraged
Brilliant
Impressed
Grateful
Positive
Happy
Better
Welcome
Reassured
Feedback from Service Users

ENGAGEMENT & CAMPAIGNS

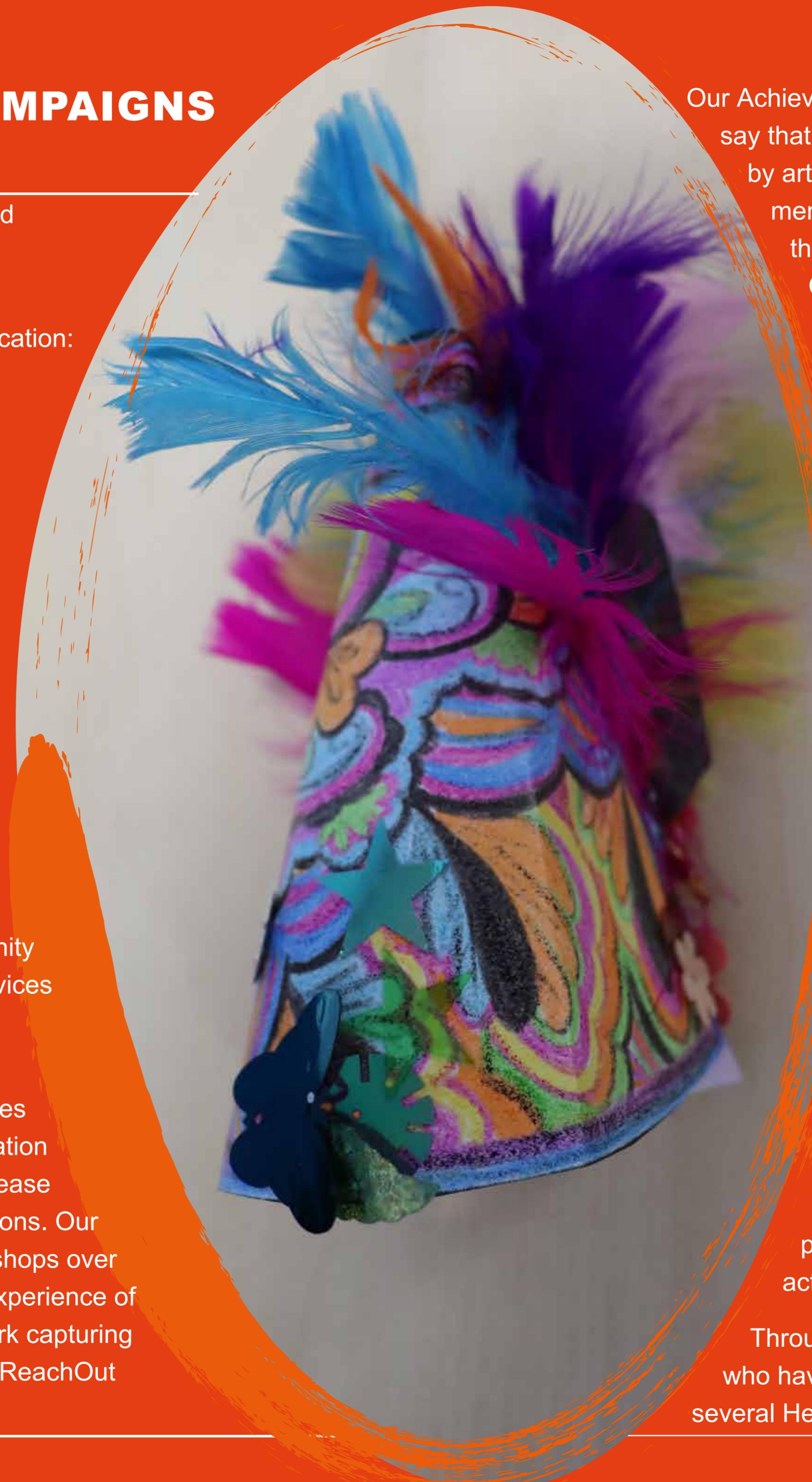
REACHOUT CREATE

1. The Reachout Create project was awarded funding from London Community Fund's Adobe Funding in September 2024.

The project aims, as listed in our funding application:

1. Increasing confidence for our members to share their stories in creative ways
2. Increasing awareness of and accessibility to Reachout Project events within the Croydon community and its services
3. Decreasing stigma within the community around lived experience of mental health using the archive of artwork/stories/expressions we will compile
4. Developing a diverse representation of stories within Hear Us anti-stigma work through creative co-production of workshops/training
5. Providing different services with a greater understanding of how to aid individuals in mental health crisis to strengthen community relationships and renew trust in these services

With Reachout Create, we aim to empower volunteers with more inclusive and accessible ways of expressing their lived experience stories through creative means to increase representation of mental health service users' voices, to decrease stigma around living with mental health conditions. Our objective is to run creative sessions and workshops over 2 years through which 200 people with lived experience of mental ill health in Croydon will produce artwork capturing their stories, which will be used as part of the 'ReachOut Challenge' anti-stigma campaign.



Our Achievements: We are proud to say that all our workshops are led by artists with lived experience of mental health. We commenced the project with our Reachout Create Open Day on 17th December 2024. This event hosted a paper rose making workshop, a creative writing activity, festive decoration colouring and reflection, and a paper quilling station. Our second workshop, led by renowned artist Liz Atkin, was the first in a series of six workshops planned for the year. Participants learned charcoal techniques to paint seascapes inspired by the Whitstable Coast. The workshop ended with a beautiful collaborative drawing that allowed participants to contribute in whichever way made them comfortable.

Each workshop includes a campaigns element which gives participants time to reflect on their personal mental health journey. Some participants will speak openly to the group while others will silently complete the activity. Doing this at the start of the workshop opens up the topic of mental health at the start so that the therapeutic properties of the creative activity are more effective. It also allows the workshop facilitator and volunteers to notice if any participants need more care and attention during the activities, based on what they have shared or heard.

Through this project, we have recruited four new volunteers who have become dependable and consistent helpers with several Hear Us project activities.



May
Engagement &
Campaigning Manager

Participant and Volunteer Feedback from our Funder Interim Report

Future Plans: The workshops we have planned for the rest of the calendar year include teaching participants charcoal and soft pastel techniques, polyprinting techniques, paper mache, steam-punk inspired drawing, zine-making, and more.

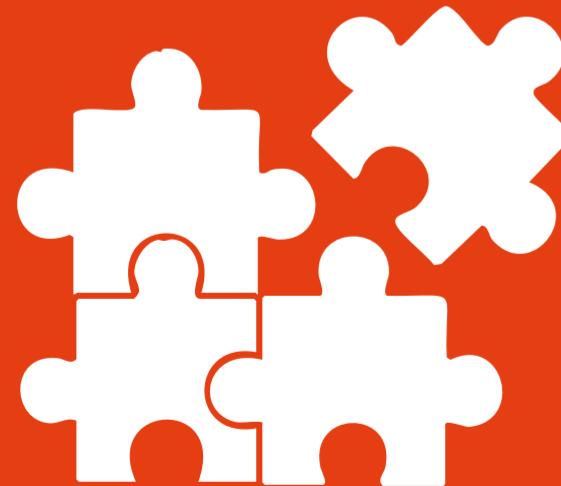
May Elroubi, Engagement & Campaigns Manager
Email: create@hear-us.org
Webpage: www.hear-us.org/reachout/create

CAMPAIGNING

This year, we made notable progress towards each of our Campaigns aims:

1. Build Hear Us capacity to transform our campaigning capacity to achieve strategic, systemic change in services
2. Co-produce campaigning activity with people with lived experience
3. Improve diversity of staff, volunteers and members
4. Work in partnership with other groups/organisations to produce campaigning activity
5. Use monitoring and evaluation to learn and improve

We've used creative Campaigns activities during our Reachout Create workshops to introduce concepts like 'framing' and the Social Model of Disability to our members. These helped people communicate their stories and the barriers they face in society more productively. These activities are inspired by movement organising spaces such as the Inclusion London PowerUp Together workshops, the Disability Justice Fund learning sessions, and the online Community of Practice for Communication Strategy meetings. These events have enriched the project coordinator's understanding of campaigns messaging and the importance of



“I was initially nervous to attend the group, but everybody was so welcoming and friendly. It’s really cheered me up on what has been a difficult week”

having unified messaging across the disability justice movement. From this knowledge, we have also been able to improve our social media copy when communicating our views to our members or seeking their input. Re-instating our Reachout Challenge steering group meetings has helped build capacity for campaigning in our ROC volunteers by aligning our training materials to the Social Model of Disability, and framing their stories in more impactful ways.

In September 2024, we began working on a campaign for World Mental Health Day under the theme 'It's Time to Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace'. We heard from our staff, members and volunteers, as well as other mental health community members, about the barriers they experience in the workplace. We gathered their testimonials through anonymous surveys and advisory group presentations. Our

new Campaigns segment, the Voice of Change, served as a monthly space to discuss views and co-produce campaign messages. The Voice of Change segment is a platform for service users to:

- Voice questions to SLaM staff, commissioners, or councillors.
- Highlight issues they have heard about or experienced in mental health services.
- Recommend campaigns for Hear Us to collaborate on with other organizations.
- Advocate for the change they want to see.
- Learn about how to contribute to the campaign's project and any active Hear Us campaigns.

These testimonials gathered will be incorporated into our upcoming campaigns messaging against welfare benefit reforms and the government's attempts to 'Get Britain Working'.



The Reachout Create project, which involves creative activities, has been instrumental in diversifying our volunteer base. We have recruited creative volunteers from different age groups and ethnic backgrounds with diverse skills and interests who participate in our campaigns activities, thus increasing representation in our messaging. Their efforts

also make it possible for us to continue hosting Campaigns activities and connecting with more diverse communities.

This year we prioritised building a local and London-wide network through the events and forums mentioned. As a result, we began discussions with Breaking Out the Bubble Brixton about collaborating on lived experience training to first responders as an extension of our Reachout Challenge anti-stigma campaign activities. We hope to return to this discussion when there is more capacity for collaboration. For our World Mental Health Day campaign, we worked with Status Employment and SUITE to gather data from service users. We co-signed Inclusion Barnet's national Campaign for Disability Justice alongside many national Disabled People's Organisations. David and I attended a protest against the Government Green Paper, Pathways to Work, outside Number 10 Downing Street. Thanks to DPAC for organising this action against welfare reforms.

Attending the Disability Justice Fund Learning sessions gave us an opportunity to reflect on our project plan and take stock of our achievements and learning opportunities. There is room for improvement in our monitoring and evaluation practices for our campaigns activities, which will be a greater focus for the following year.

Overall, it has been valuable representing Hear Us and our work in mental health in Disability Justice spaces in London.



Future plans

- Continue establishing our Volunteer Development & Training program with other Hear Us project leads
- Instate volunteer information sessions to make recruitment more accessible and streamlined
- Recruit designated Campaigns volunteers to develop and lead the Voice of Change segment
- Establish a Campaigns Steering Group for Hear Us staff to devise pathways for campaigns activities to happen systematically across projects

May Elroubi, Engagement & Campaigns Manager
Email: campaignsproject@hear-us.org
Webpage: <https://www.hear-us.org/campaigning-project>

REACHOUT CHALLANGE

The Reachout Challenge (ROC) Project raises awareness about living with mental health challenges by providing lived experience volunteer-led training to public service employees. We tailor our training content to employees who are likely to interact with people in mental health crisis, such as police and ambulance service employees. ROC volunteers challenge stigmas around mental health by sharing their personal accounts of being in crisis and providing a safe space for participants to share their own personal experiences with mental health.

Our Achievements

This year, we held our usual quarterly sessions with members of police forces from the UK and all over the world at esteemed Hostage and Crisis Negotiation Course, hosted by the Leatherhead Police Federation. Each session brought unique challenges and successes, which our volunteer team handled with grace and humility.

We relaunched our ROC Steering Group which runs 1-3 times per month or as needed. Having this time for generating ideas and discussing trainee feedback has made making changes to the training material a lot easier. It's a space for the volunteer trainers to give their honest input and connect with each other outside of the training sessions. We've used the time to check in on each other emotionally, discuss the future of the project, and share lived experiences. It's especially useful for when new or returning volunteers join the group and want a space to get familiar with the project without diving straight into the training sessions.



Hear Us would like to thank our volunteers who extend their time, energy, and vulnerability make this project possible.

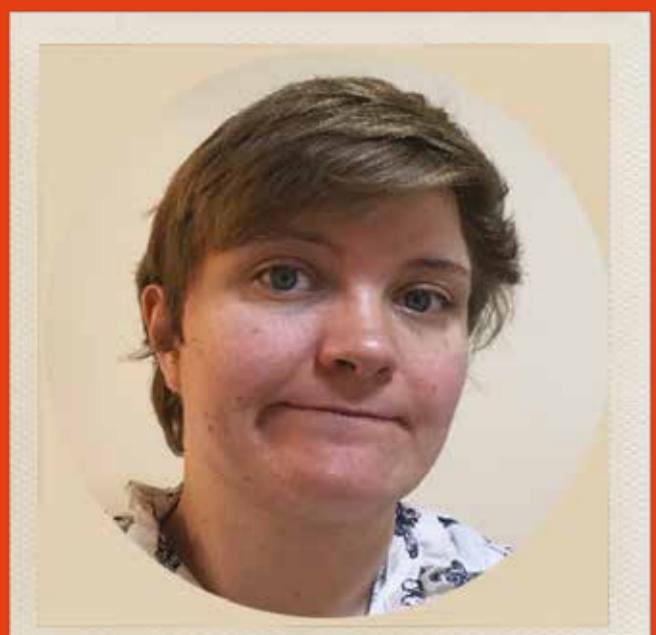
May Elroubi,
Engagement & Campaigns Manager
Email: reachout.challenge@hear-us.org
Tel: 020 8681 6888
Webpage: www.hear-us.org/reachout

**“Thank you
for your honesty
and time and the
continued work that you
do.”**

**“There is never enough time
to share experiences like yours,
thank you!”**

**“This was a great input, it
would have been nice to
have some more time.
It’s a great input.”**

MENTAL HEALTH OPEN FORUM



Amy
Open Forum Coordinator

The Hear Us Mental Health Open Forum is a place for the local mental health community to come together and discuss services that they access and other issues that affect them. The Forum is primarily aimed at service users, but we welcome carers, volunteers, staff and anyone

with an interest in mental health to discuss the issues that affect us all. This year Hear Us held 10 Open Forums and were joined by 18 Guest Speakers.

Discussion and Feedback Sessions

Giving members a safe space to give feedback to shape and improve services is an important part of the Open Forum. The Open forum held a number of feedback and discussion groups on a range of topics and services. This included Developing

the Adult Social Care and Health Strategy with Croydon Council and a list of 5 standards of professional care for patients with mental health needs with Croydon University Hospital. The

forum held many feedback sessions with SLaM such us what information about SLaM services would Service users



and their families find useful, SLaM's Mental Health Act Reduction Project, and the Croydon Personality Disorder Service.

Highlighting Services

The Open Forum also strives to highlight mental health and wellbeing services that members can access. In November for Men's Mental Health Awareness Month we were joined by MenWalkTalk, a charity focusing on men's mental health. We were joined by Studio Upstairs and Active Minds to talk about their activity groups. Status Employment spoke about supporting people with complex needs to overcome barriers to employment. SlaM spoke to us about how to access different services such as SLaM's SUITE, (Service user and carer involvement in Training and Education), Advance Choice Documents and how to get involved in research at SlaM.

Information

There can be a lot of misinformation in the news and on social media about important information such as benefits, this can create added worry and stress for our members. The Open Forum aims to provide accurate and up to date information on topics effecting our members. David from Hear US Welfare Rights Advice Project spoke to our members about the Migration to Universal Credit of people on ESA and Housing Benefit. David and May spoke about the Government Benefit Consultation, what it would mean and how to get involved. Members find this sessions very helpful with one member saying "Excellent presentations. Very informative. Thank you"

Accessibility

This year the Open Forum has focused on improving the accessibility of our meetings. Hear Us wanted to ensure

We wanted members to be able to access the useful information and still contribute to feedback sessions even if they are unable to attend the meetings. Also understanding that some members may need to have time and space to think about questions asked in feedback sessions and respond at a later date. The Open Forum recourses email recaps key information from each talk, how to respond to feedback sessions as well as relevant mental health events and news. We aim to



Open Forum Feedback from our Members

insure the information is accessible for those with cognitive difficulties and for those who English is not their first language. We do this by making sure the email is written in plain English, with sentences 12 words or less and not using abbreviations or acronyms.

Inclusion

The Open Forum aims to promote inclusion and create a welcoming space for all our members. This includes promoting the work and events of other community groups committed to inclusion such as Croydon Pride, Rainbow Minds, the BME Forum. The Forum works hard to invite a range of guests that represent our diverse members. This has included Neurodivergent guests and guests committed to BME inclusion. Angela Kibia, BREaD Research Assistant at SLaM spoke to us about BREaD (Building Race Equity & Diversity) in Research Network. Rasheed from Croydon BME Forum spoke to us about EMHIP (Ethnicity and Mental Health Improvement Programme) and the projects future plans.

Amy Kirksmith

Open Forum Project Coordinator

Email: forum@hear-us.org

Webpage: www.hear-us.org/forum/

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

Development and Fundraising has been focused on attaining and maintaining grants from grant funders for three main areas:

1. Funding for the Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) for 2025-2030
2. Funding for Reachout Challenge and Linkworking and 3) monitoring and reporting to funders on existing grants.

We are very grateful to all our grant funders who make it possible for us to support people with mental health challenges in Croydon. This included additional funding for a 3rd advisor for the WRAP project and the Sustainability Strategy Project from the National Lottery from September 2024 to March 2025, funding for Reachout Challenge Create project from London Community Foundation/Adobe and working on monitoring and other bids for 2025 onwards.

We received some regular and one-off donations from the public which we are grateful for. We would like to encourage more donations and will be working to increase our visibility to expand our income which can be used to support growth of the charity and meet the needs of our members and service users more effectively.

We have received free consultancy and training through our grant funders to improve the services we provide and develop our staff skills and expertise. Notable are support from Cranfield Trust funded by the National Lottery for our Sustainability Strategy project and training and coaching opportunities through Lloyds Foundation.

Alongside the development support we have received via our funders, we will be reviewing the most effective ways to work to ensure our service users have the right support at the right time in the right way. More development work is planned during 2025-2026 including to:-

Undertake business modelling to use our finances more effectively with expertise from Inclusion London,

1. Implement our vision, mission and values,
2. Select and implement a new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM),
3. Governance training for our Board of Trustees,
4. Recruiting a second part time fundraiser and

5. Working on influencing national policy through our partners such as Inclusion London.

AQS accreditation continues to act as a catalyst to improve the way we work and the services we provide making them more effective for people who use our services. We were focused on maintaining our AQS accreditation through quarterly and annual reviews of our WRAP. This continues to be a significant overhead but we believe it is worth it as it ensures that we continually learn lessons from monitoring and feedback from our service users and implement changes where appropriate to make our services more effective for those using them.

We have continued to develop our relationship with Inclusion London, London's pan-disability forum, to address issues around disability equality, equity and inclusion, and through the organisation health check which identified areas to address to improve service delivery. We will be working with Inclusion London to ensure that we are in practice a disability friendly organisation, accessible to all, rooted in the mental health community, providing a mechanism for all those with mental health challenges to have their say and change services for the better.

Our work in 2025-2026 will focus on maintaining our AQS accreditation, developing our vision for the future and partnership working and identifying and obtaining funding sources

Eleanor Yates

Development & Fundraising Manager



Funder	Service	Grant Period
South West London ICS	Core, Linkworking and Open Forum	April 2022-March 2027
City Bridge Foundation	WRAP	April 2021-March 2024 extended to March 2026
National Lottery Reaching Communities	WRAP, Sustainability Strategy & Deputy CEO	Jan 2022-Mar 2025
Lloyds Foundation	Development and Fundraising	December 2023-December 2026
Trust for London	Campaigns	April 2023-March 2026
London Community Foundation/Adobe	Reachout Challenge Create	September 2024-August 2026

Extracts of Hear Us Annual Accounts 24-25

	2025	2024
Current assets		
Debtors	£1,538	£244
Cash at bank and in hand	£255,513	£281,079
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	£3,191	£1,796
Net assets	£253,860	£279,527
Restricted funds	£48,579	£63,519
Unrestricted funds	£205,281	£216,008
Total Charity funds	£253,860	£279,527

SUPPORT THE
GOOD WORK HEAR US
DOES BY DONATING AS
LITTLE AS
£5 OR MORE!
£5 A MONTH
AND HELP US PROVIDE
ACCESS TO FINANCIAL,
HEALTH AND SOCIAL
INCLUSION SUPPORT



HEAR US CROYDON FUNDERS 2024/25



The London
Community
Foundation



CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION



Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality



HEAR US CROYDON

www.hear-us.org/donate

SCAN QR CODE
TO DONATE &
SUPPORT



A Voice for Change in Mental Health

Lived Experience Leading Change



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

These tables show the Equality and Diversity of people that Hear Us have supported over period April 2024 to March 2025

The people that the Linkworking were not asked to provide us with data. We are currently looking at a number of options to gather this data

ETHNICITY	Total	%
African	80	2.2%
Any other Asian background	23	0.6%
Any other Black background	2	0.1%
Any other Black, African or Caribbean background	36	1.0%
Any other ethnic group	11	0.3%
Any other Mixed background	8	0.2%
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	31	0.9%
Any other White background	48	1.3%
Arab	5	0.1%
Asian British	26	0.7%
Bangladeshi	6	0.2%
Black British	224	6.2%
Caribbean	69	1.9%
Chinese	1	0.0%
Indian	30	0.8%
Irish	15	0.4%
Not Disclosed	344	9.5%
Other White background	10	0.3%
Pakistani	10	0.3%
Sri Lankan	2	0.1%
White & Asian	16	0.4%
White & Black African	9	0.2%
White & Black Caribbean	35	1.0%
English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	579	15.9%
Linkwork Project # Service Users	2012	55.4%
Grand Total	3632	100%

GENDER	Total	%
Female	833	22.9%
Male	528	14.5%
Non Binary	12	0.3%
Transgender	6	0.2%
Not Disclosed	241	6.6%
Linkwork Project	2012	55.4%
Grand Total	3632	100%

SEXUALITY	Total	%
Asexual	14	0.4%
Bisexual	33	0.9%
Gay	17	0.5%
Heterosexual	1036	28.5%
Lesbian	18	0.5%
Not Disclosed	500	13.8%
Other	2	0.1%
Linkwork Project	2012	55.4%
Grand Total	3632	100%

Age Group	Total	%
16 - 20	20	0.6%
21 - 30	195	5.4%
31 - 40	246	6.8%
41 - 50	278	7.7%
51 - 60	339	9.3%
61 - 70	188	5.2%
71 - 80	41	1.1%
81+	10	0.3%
Not Disclosed	303	8.3%
Linkwork Project	2012	55.4%
Grand Total	3632	100%

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



HEAR US HANDED OUT £50 ALDI VOUCHERS

Postcode	Total	%
BR3	3	0.1%
CR0	776	21.4%
CR2	119	3.3%
CR3	7	0.2%
CR4	1	0.0%
CR5	76	2.1%
CR7	218	6.0%
CR8	98	2.7%
CR9	5	0.1%
SE19	42	1.2%
SE25	99	2.7%
SM5	1	0.0%
SW16	48	1.3%
Homeless	1	0.0%
Out of Area	68	1.9%
Not Disclosed	58	1.6%
Linkwork Project	2012	55.4%
Grand Total	3632	100.0%

BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

We represent the views of people that use mental health services in Croydon to service providers and commissioners.

We contribute to the local mental health promotion agenda, and promote positive mental health within the local community.

We promote mutual respect and equality of rights and opportunities, regardless of disability, with particular reference to local mental health service users and service survivors.

We actively campaign with members on issues raised by members themselves and actively oppose discrimination against service users in Croydon for improvements in local mental health services.

We reach out to all service users to encourage and support participation in the Open Forum and other events Hear Us are involved in.

We offer service users a communication platform for the constructive exchange of ideas on issues affecting them.

We provide a wide range of information about local and national services and up and coming issues that concern users of mental health services in Croydon. Support Hear Us and get involved in the work Hear Us does in all sorts of ways. There's no pressure to do anything, but if you are keen to take action we'll support you every step of the way. Potential opportunities include:

Becoming a Peer Support Worker with the Linkworking Project and supporting other service users whilst helping to improve our mental health services.

Coming along to our monthly Open Forums to join our campaigns to have your voice heard.

Joining our Reachout Challenge Volunteers and help fight stigma and discrimination.

Supporting Hear Us is suitable for people with a mental illness, parents or carers and professionals living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. You'll receive regular invites to our events exactly how you wish to receive them, either through regular mail or email.... You choose.

BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

I am a resident in London Borough of Croydon

Have a recognisable interest in mental health service user issues in Croydon

Have had emotional, or psychological problems, or, some form of mental illness

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

Age & DOB:

Gender:

Sexuality:

Ethnicity:

Religion:

Disability:

Please tick how you wish to receive correspondence

Post	Email	Phone	Mobile	Text
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Hear Us will not use the information you provide for anything other than distribution of invitations to meetings.

Please read the form thoroughly and check that the information you have provided is correct before signing.

Signature:



Hear Us
Orchard House,
15a Purley Road
South Croydon
CR2 6EZ



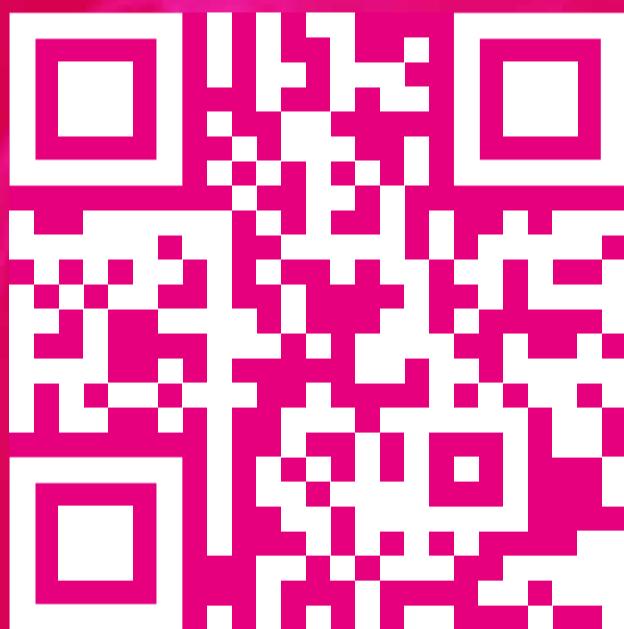
020 8681 6888



hello@hear-us.org



www.hear-us.org



Our Vision: For people with mental ill health to have the support needed to thrive, and an end to restrictive and coercive healthcare practices.

Our Mission: To empower people with mental ill health, drive systemic change, based on real experiences, and challenge negative perceptions associated with mental illness, stamping out stigma and discrimination.