



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-26

Developed in collaboration with staff, supporters and those who use our services, our strategy charts an ambitious path with a loud, brave vision.



BUILDING A SOCIETY THAT WELCOMES EVERYONE

“While we remain committed to fighting for the rights of young people, we are proud to design new services that respond to the lived experience of our service users and extend our reach to wider communities. We will work harder than ever to fight stigma and evidence its harm, building a society that welcomes everyone and trusts people to make decisions about their health, their bodies and their identities.”

Helen Marshall
Chief Executive

Dame Sally Dicketts
Chair

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CHAIR

Brook is proud to introduce our new strategic plan for 2023-2026.

Developed in collaboration with staff, supporters and those who use our services, it charts an ambitious path with a loud, brave vision as we approach our 60th year.

Since publishing our last strategy, Brook has been on a remarkable journey through challenging times. We have worked hard to strengthen our foundations and adapt to new ways of working, allowing us not only to survive but to thrive.

However, we continue to operate in an increasingly demanding commissioning environment. Over the last eight years, two thirds of local authorities in England have cut their spending on sexual and reproductive health, and contraception budgets have been halved. As a result, we are witnessing poorer health outcomes with exacerbated disparities and inequality.

Our life course approach to sexual and reproductive health is now firmly embedded in our strategic direction and we will continue to evolve by investing in research and our data. While we remain committed to fighting for the rights of young people, we are proud to design new services that respond to the lived experience of our service users and extend our reach to wider communities.

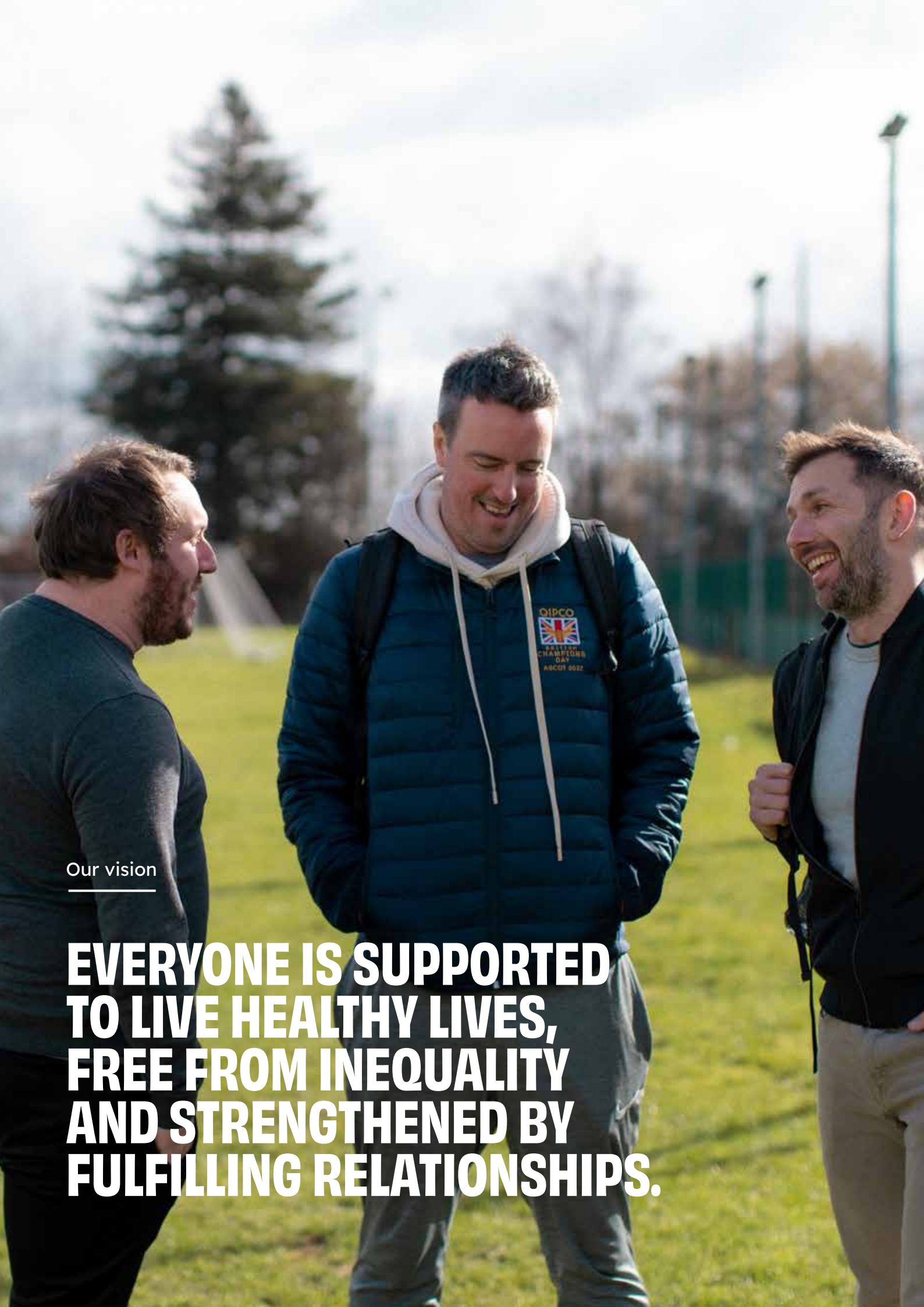
To do this successfully, we must work harder than ever to fight stigma and evidence its harm. We know that stigma drives misinformation and shame and

translates to health inequality - particularly when it comes to sexual and mental health. We are saddened and outraged to see unprecedented threats to people's choice, rights and freedom of identity; principles that sit at the very core of our work. Brook is resolute in its commitment to standing for and with those affected. We will continue to fight for a society that welcomes everyone and trusts people to make decisions about their health, their bodies and their identities.

We have always adopted a holistic approach, recognising the interplay between mental, physical and sexual health. Currently, almost two thirds of young people with a mental health condition are unable to access the NHS care and treatment they need. We're looking forward to learning with others, growing and developing new initiatives that will have a significant impact on the wellbeing of young people. We are also committed to increasing accessibility to our services for those who face additional barriers such as neurodivergent young people.

Brook has ambitious plans for growth and expansion; we will remain focused on our pioneering transformation of digital health services, expand our provision for adults and develop new commercial income streams to drive innovation.

Underpinning this exciting new strategy is our firm and unwavering commitment to be courageous and inclusive, collaborative and trustworthy. We look forward to working with existing partners and developing new relationships as we call for urgent action to improve health outcomes.



Our vision

**EVERYONE IS SUPPORTED
TO LIVE HEALTHY LIVES,
FREE FROM INEQUALITY
AND STRENGTHENED BY
FULFILLING RELATIONSHIPS.**

Our mission

EXCELLENT SEXUAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IS A RIGHT.

Brook exists to fight for that right and we demand better, especially for young people. We challenge stigma, amplify voices and provide lifelong support that meets the diverse needs of our communities.



AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

Underpinning this exciting strategy is our firm and unwavering commitment to be courageous and inclusive, collaborative and trustworthy.



Trustworthy

People turn to Brook when they need help, trusting in our confidential, non-judgmental support to keep them safe. Robust research, data and evidence underpins all our work, making Brook a trusted partner and an authoritative source of information and advice.



Collaborative

Our service users are at the heart of our decisions. We listen to their needs, champion their rights and work with them to effect real change. We value and prioritise collaboration, sharing and growing our expertise to achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities.



Inclusive

We are committed to tackling prejudice wherever we find it, challenging harmful attitudes and behaviours. We celebrate diversity, champion equality, and provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone who needs us.



Courageous

Brook is fearless when fighting for change. We stand up for what we believe and we demand to be heard. We relentlessly push the boundaries and are bold in our ambition to pioneer innovative services that meet ever-changing needs.



CHALLENGING INEQUALITY

Brook is committed to challenging the systemic causes of health inequalities. The nature of our services, and the trust we build with those who come to us for support, means we gain a unique insight into the wider inequalities that affect their wellbeing, far beyond sexual health.

We are dedicated to broadening our offer by providing a range of support that addresses multiple interconnected and complex needs. We will amplify the voices of those most impacted by inequality informed by data, research and the participation of those with lived experience. Key to this will be collaboration with the experts and organisations that know these communities best, sharing knowledge and expertise to deliver equitable solutions with maximum impact for as many people as possible.

As we move forward with our transformative digital programme, we will carefully consider digital inclusion so that our services do not exacerbate inequality. We will champion a blend of high quality face-to-face and digital services that we know work well, offering users a choice while keeping safe the most vulnerable.

We celebrated the advent of mandatory relationships and sex education in 2020 but the battle for equal access to high quality, inclusive RSE is not yet won. We are committed to ensuring that the statutory guidance is not only broadened and deepened, but also protected from erosion. We will not rest until all young people – especially those that face additional barriers – enjoy equitable access to RSE that enriches their lives.



HOW WE AIM TO ACHIEVE THIS

1 Work with communities

Work directly with communities experiencing inequitable health outcomes and undertake research to better understand and respond to the root cause of the inequality.

2 Speak out on inequality

Speak out on inequality where we find it, amplifying the voices of those affected and using our evidence to influence the commissioning of services that meet their needs.

3 Broaden our offering

Broaden our digital offer and use our physical spaces to provide a range of health and wellbeing support services that address multiple needs.

4 Blended services

Provide a blended and equitable digital and face-to-face service offer, tackling digital exclusion and providing service users with a choice of access points.

5 Fight for RSE

Continue the fight for high quality, comprehensive and inclusive RSE as a universal right for all young people including those not in mainstream education or who experience other access barriers.



INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

Reductions in public funding have led to a critical shortfall in place-based support, particularly for young people. We believe it is the role of Brook, and others in the sector, to be proactive in representing the needs of our service users and fight harder than ever for their right to access services, demanding better from those in power and advocating for those most at risk.

We are committed to ensuring our services are accessible to all, and we will work to reach and support those who may be vulnerable or experiencing disadvantage, discrimination or exclusion. We will develop tailored, inclusive services that meet particular access needs, and we will take our services to those who need them. By working with parents, carers, families and professionals, we will maximise the impact and accessibility of our offer.

Our ambitious plans for expansion and geographical growth are driven by the belief that excellent sexual health, mental health and wellbeing is a right. We know that many people struggle to access support and we are determined to reach as many of them as possible. In areas where we do not yet have a presence, we will develop partnerships that add value to the work of others.

It is not enough that services are accessible. Those who need them must feel safe, represented and welcomed. We will work to increase understanding of sexual health and wider wellbeing services, and challenge the stigmas that can prevent access. The voices of our service users, and those we are yet to reach, are critical to ensuring that our services are accessible to those who need them the most.

Our rapidly expanding digital offers will enable more people than ever before to access evidence-based information, advice and support wherever they are. Our digital clinical services will widen access and be sector leading in their dedication to safeguarding and user involvement. Every digital touch point will have accessibility at its very heart.



HOW WE AIM TO ACHIEVE THIS

1 Expanding our reach

Expand into new geographical areas, working in partnership to provide services at the heart of the community, in locations and spaces that our service users already access.

2 More access and support

Enable more people to access sexual health and wellbeing support, through promotion and marketing activity that both increases awareness and normalises access to services.

3 Dedicated services and resources

Provide dedicated services and resources that respond to particular access needs, while retaining a universal offer that is open to all.

4 Fit for purpose

Ensure that service design responds to the lived experience of service users, as well as those not currently accessing services, by championing a data and feedback driven approach.

5 User engagement and accessibility

Embed user engagement and accessibility in the design and development of our digital services, ensuring that our digital tools meet everyone's needs.

6 More greener approach

Evolve and expand our Digital Front Door increasing functionality, broadening access and achieving sustainability.

7 The 'go to' resource hub

Develop a range of programmes that equip parents, carers, families and professionals to support young people to access sexual health, mental health and wellbeing support.



FIGHTING STIGMA

Brook knows that stigma is a major contributing factor to health inequality, particularly when it comes to sexual health and mental health. Stigma can make vital information and discussion about everyday health issues taboo, generates shame and leads to a reluctance to ask for help or support.

Brook will open up conversations about sexual health and mental health, removing shame and embarrassment, and normalising access to services as part of routine healthcare. We will work to overcome the silence, fear and prejudice that reinforces stigma, and to understand where our work to tackle it can have most impact. We will educate and equip professionals, parents and families with the skills and knowledge they need to challenge stigma and combat damaging misinformation, giving young people the opportunity to grow and learn in a world that accepts and celebrates them.

Over recent years, we witnessed increasing attacks on sexual and reproductive rights that are both shaped by, and reinforce, stigma. We will tirelessly defend the right to safe, confidential, accessible healthcare, regardless of age, gender or sexuality. We will be a unifying voice, working collaboratively with our partners and the wider sector to lead a positive vision for the nation's sexual health and wellbeing.

We will fearlessly stand up and shout loudly about issues others may consider too risky or taboo. We will evidence the harm caused by stigma, sharing real stories to show how the lives of young people and other communities are affected. We will use our platform to speak with authority and confidence, driven always by evidence, research, data and the voice of service users. We will challenge damaging narratives and model an open, inclusive, kind and positive approach.



HOW WE AIM TO ACHIEVE THIS

1 Change people's perceptions

Change perceptions of sexual and reproductive health, normalising access to services as a core part of a person's ongoing healthcare needs throughout their life.

2 Stamp out stigma

Use our platform to shout loudly about the harm caused by stigma, tackling misinformation, increasing understanding and normalising positive, open communication about sexual health and wellbeing.

3 Amplify voices

Amplify the voices of those that stigma can silence, fearlessly championing the rights of young people and other communities that find their rights under attack.

4 Utilise data and evidence

Use data and evidence to fight for a strategic policy commitment to sexual and reproductive health and meaningful investment in both specialist and universal services.

5 Thought leadership

Grow our profile as the leading expert on all aspects of sexual health and relationships, using our platform to galvanise change.

6 The 'go to' resource hub

Educate and equip professionals, parents and families to challenge stigma and address misinformation at every opportunity, using a blend of face-to-face and digital approaches.



DRIVING INNOVATION

When Helen Brook founded Brook in 1964, her innovative commitment to the sexual health needs of unmarried women faced a maelstrom of public controversy. Brook today remains steadfast in its commitment to pioneering innovative services that are at the forefront of changing needs, and normalising what society can sometimes consider controversial.

We continue to push boundaries and innovate to expand our reach and our services. We know that good sexual health and good mental health are inextricably linked and, for as long as Brook has existed, young people have asked us for support with their wider wellbeing. Our robust safeguarding work evidences an alarming increase in unmet mental health and wellbeing needs at a time when the mental health system is unable to respond. Brook will pioneer new early intervention mental health and suicide prevention services for young people, with a range of support accessible from an

organisation that young people already know and trust.

We are committed to expanding our support for adults as we return to our roots of providing services for people of all ages. We will support young people as they transition into adulthood, and work with those adults whose health has been impacted by a lack of high quality RSE, to fill the gaps in knowledge and offer sexual and reproductive healthcare that meets their needs throughout their lives.

We will foster a culture within which our expertise can be leveraged and a spirit of innovation incubated. Our focus on data analysis, research and user participation will drive continuous improvement and inform the development of future services. We will be thought leaders and will mobilise the sector to tackle shared challenges; collaborating with experts within our field and beyond. We will continue to diversify and create new income opportunities allowing us to invest in realising our ambitions.



HOW WE AIM TO ACHIEVE THIS

1 Create change

Drive a culture of innovation and thought leadership through continuous evaluation of data and collaboration with experts in the field.

2 Data informed decision

Develop our research and analytical capabilities to inform the future development of services and ensure we are ready to meet changing and diverse needs.

3 More support for adults

Expand our sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing support and provision for adults.

4 Mental health services

Develop new early intervention mental health and suicide prevention support services for young people, accessible through community hubs with one door to sexual health, mental health and wider wellbeing support.

5 Drive digital innovation

Continue to drive digital innovation enabling self-care and providing accessible information that is sector leading and responds directly to user needs.

6 Funding innovation

Develop new commercial income streams and grow unrestricted income to fund innovation and business incubation.



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