



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-29



WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO TACKLE HEALTH DISPARITIES

“Brook believes in a society where everyone is supported to live healthy, safe and fulfilling lives. Yet we know that deep-rooted inequalities within our society impact the health outcomes of our most vulnerable communities and marginalised groups. As we deliver our new strategic plan, we will work collaboratively to co-design specialist services for those experiencing additional access needs, be bold and fearless in challenging the stigma that can increase barriers to care, and fight for the right to lifelong support that is inclusive, non-judgmental and accessible to all.”

Helen Marshall
Chief Executive

Dame Sally Dicketts
Chair

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHAIR

Brook is proud to introduce our new strategic plan for 2026-2029. Developed in collaboration with staff, supporters and those who use our services, it sets out our unwavering commitment and ambition within an undeniably turbulent environment.

The demand for Brook's services is increasing. Data from the UK Health Security Agency demonstrates soaring demand for sexual health services; sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancy rates are rising, and we are facing an unprecedented crisis in children and young people's mental health. Women experience poorer health outcomes than men, with Black women and disabled women particularly impacted. Women and girls are experiencing increasing incidences of sexual violence, harassment and misogyny, with boys and young men struggling in education, less likely to access stable work and more likely to be caught up in crime. LGBT+ people experience unequal treatment and care, trans people report feeling unsafe in the UK, and the health disparities faced by trans, non-binary and gender diverse people has been described as a public health crisis. We are saddened that social media and online spaces have increased the spread of mis/disinformation which we know drives shame and threatens safe decision-making.

This growth in demand is set against the context of mounting financial pressures within the charitable sector. With a backdrop of surging costs, charities are experiencing falling donations, increased competition for grants, and public sector contracts that often fail to cover the true cost of delivering services. While demand for services increases, charities are being forced to reduce expenditure, scale back delivery and rely on reserves to meet core costs.

Within this landscape, it is essential that Brook continues to innovate, working efficiently and sustainably to support those who need us the most. Our holistic services have always recognised the interwoven links between sexual, physical and mental health, and the importance of healthy relationships. Through the delivery of this strategic plan, we will develop and co-design specialist services for those who experience additional barriers and we will work collaboratively – with sector partners, with local communities and with our service users – to amplify our collective impact through shared intelligence, joint advocacy, thought leadership and service user voice.

We remain true to our mission and values, shouting louder, fighting harder, and being bold and fearless in defending rights. Our strategic plan is ambitious but by working together we believe it is achievable. We look forward to working with you.



Our vision

**EVERYONE IS SUPPORTED
TO LIVE HEALTHY, SAFE AND
FULFILLING LIVES**

Our mission

**BROOK FIGHTS FOR THE RIGHT TO
EXCELLENT SEXUAL HEALTH,
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING,
OFFERING SUPPORT THAT IS
INCLUSIVE, NON-JUDGMENTAL
AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.





INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

Brook believes that high quality, inclusive, non-judgmental healthcare should be accessible to all, yet too often those with the greatest need are the least well served.

Societal factors such as socio-economic deprivation and individual characteristics including race, gender and disability, intersect in complex ways to shape and deepen health inequalities. Disparities are compounded by limited access to services in areas of deprivation, while discrimination and stigma place a disproportionate burden on the most marginalised and vulnerable communities.

Through the delivery of this strategy, we will prioritise access for underserved groups and those who experience prejudice and discrimination. We will dismantle access barriers and develop resources that meet the needs of people who are

neurodivergent, experience a label of SEND, are care experienced and in alternative education settings. We will work with specialist partners to further develop our services so they are accessible to sex workers, those in the youth justice system, those who are homeless and refugees/asylum seekers. To maximise the impact of our offer, we will educate and equip parents, carers, and professionals working in the youth and health sectors with the skills, knowledge and resources they need to provide effective information and support.

We will expand our services into new geographical areas, enabling more people to access the support they need. Through our co-design approach, we will reveal unmet needs, ensure marginalised voices are heard, and foster trust and engagement within communities. By tailoring our place-based offer to local needs, characteristics and assets, and by working in partnership with local specialist services, we will add value, amplify impact and promote excellence.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

1. Work directly with those experiencing inequitable health outcomes, launching dedicated services for underserved communities.

2. Develop resources that respond to specific access needs, equipping young people, adults and the professionals who support them with the skills and knowledge they need.

3. Expand our services into new geographic areas through a localised, place-based offer in collaboration with community experts, amplifying their specialist skills.

4. Meet service users where they are through a range of access points including targeted community outreach, self-service and digital provision, protecting dedicated services for those who need them most.

5. Ensure our services are responsive and adaptive to the lived experience of service users by embedding co-design practices that ensure diversity of thought.



FIGHTING STIGMA

Stigma is a key driver of health inequality. Whether linked to poverty, mental health or sexual identity, the fear of judgment or discrimination can prevent individuals from seeking care. Stigma and shame around sexual and mental health silences conversations about everyday health issues, undermines trust in health promotion messaging and reinforces barriers to access.

This pervasive issue is being exacerbated by regressive anti-trans, anti-LGBT+, and anti-EDI rhetoric and policy. Challenges to fundamental rights including access to abortion, contraception and Gillick competence threaten to undermine decades of progress in inclusive healthcare and youth autonomy.

These challenges extend into education. The reduction in clarity and content of LGBT+ identities in the updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance is concerning, as is the lack of improvement in provision for young people experiencing SEND.

The need for reliable, accessible information and education has never been greater, yet false and deliberately misleading information is rife, and harmful online cultures and practices are growing. We will use our platform to actively counter the harms of disinformation and toxic narratives, expanding our reach and recognition so that more people can access reliable, evidence-based support. We will empower young people, and the adults who support them, with the tools and knowledge to confidently challenge misinformation and foster a culture of understanding, respect and inclusion.

We will continue to be resolute in standing our ground, fearless in defending those rights under attack and courageous in campaigning for societal and legislative change.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

1. Amplify the voices of those that stigma can silence by fearlessly championing the rights of young people and other communities that are under attack.

2. Counter the harm caused by misinformation and disinformation by challenging damaging narratives and societal attitudes through reliable, trustworthy information and education.

3. Challenge societal prejudices by championing the development of clinical, education and wellbeing services that are accessible and welcoming to neurodivergent people and those experiencing SEND.

4. Speak out on the causes of health inequalities, using our data and evidence to champion the needs of underserved communities.

5. Grow our profile and brand visibility, enabling more people and communities to access support as an essential component of lifelong healthcare.



AMPLIFYING IMPACT

As demand for services continues to grow, while resources and funding fail to keep pace, it is more critical than ever that we maximise our impact – delivering meaningful outcomes for those who need us the most.

Prevention, early intervention and health education are widely recognised as high impact, cost effective tools for improving outcomes and tackling health inequalities, while investing in young people’s health helps break cycles of disadvantage and builds lasting impact. Adolescents and young adults remain a neglected and underserved group in both physical and mental health provision, with services failing to reflect their distinct needs and lived experiences. Brook’s offer is unique; by taking youth focussed service design as our starting point, we adapt our approach to provide inclusive and accessible services for adults throughout their lives.

Our integrated clinical and educational delivery, underpinned by evidence, excellence and service user voice, provides deep insight into young people’s sexual health and wider wellbeing needs, with learning from one informing our expertise in the other. We will share our unique insight and knowledge, building skills and capability to amplify excellence across the sector, and we will undertake research with others to close gaps and drive improvement, publishing our findings to influence wider practice.

We will deepen our community partnerships to extend our reach and influence and shout loudly about our shared successes, using our platform to galvanise change. As a recognised centre of expertise, we will take a leading role in convening cross-sector professionals, academics and policy makers to spark innovation and amplify our collective impact.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

1. Act as a catalyst for thought leadership and cross-sector innovation through effective collaboration, shared intelligence and collective advocacy.

2. Prioritise prevention, health promotion and early intervention, focusing on children, young people and the professionals who support them, to drive maximum impact from available resources.

3. Disseminate our data and expertise, conducting pioneering research that improves understanding of need, drives continuous improvement and fights for legislative and policy change.

4. Expand our influence by deepening our community partnerships and networks of advocates and amplifying service user voice.

5. Grow our reputation as a centre of expertise, building on our existing excellence to become a trusted and leading voice.



DRIVING INNOVATION

Brook has a proud history of pioneering innovative services that agilely respond to society's changing needs. Our willingness to challenge convention, and our embedded commitment to user voice, has positioned us at the forefront of progressive, person-centred healthcare.

We will continue to push boundaries and innovate to meet emerging challenges. Such innovation is critical at a time when more young people than ever are struggling with their mental health, and many reach crisis point before receiving care. Recognising that good sexual and mental health are inextricably linked, Brook is already acting on what young people tell us matters most. To respond to this urgent need, we will expand and enhance our early intervention wellbeing support, removing access barriers and building scalable models that dynamically respond to local need.

At the same time, violence against women and girls has reached epidemic levels. Misogynistic narratives and extreme online pornography, exacerbated by broader social and economic disparities and feelings of disenfranchisement and powerlessness, are distorting young people's understanding of relationships and gender equality. Brook will proactively address this growing threat by embedding prevention into safeguarding strategies and investing in new services that prevent relationship abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault.

To underpin our work, we will align innovation in service delivery with innovation in infrastructure, adopting digital and AI technologies to enhance efficiency and amplify impact. By expanding and diversifying our income streams, and adopting a more creative and commercial approach to income generation, we will unlock new opportunities to accelerate our vision.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS

1. Pioneer innovative, early intervention services that address our service users' wider sexual health and wellbeing needs.

2. Respond efficiently and effectively to societal change to tackle the growing threats of sexual violence, harassment and misogyny by growing our education offer.

3. Stay at the forefront of trends to quickly respond to emerging needs with an integrated and embedded approach to participation, partnership and user voice at all levels in the organisation and across all areas of our work.

4. Continue to embed digital and AI innovation, utilising new technologies in an ethical and sustainable way to drive efficiencies and increase our impact and reach.

5. Expand and diversify our income streams and build commercial expertise to fund innovation, strengthen resilience and ensure sustainability.



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