



THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION FOR **WEST HAMPSTEAD**

Bringing the local community together

IMPACT REPORT

2025 - 2026



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ABOUT US

The Community Association for West Hampstead (CAWH) aims to enhance the life, health, and social wellbeing of the entire community in West Hampstead, especially children, young people, and older individuals at risk of isolation.

We play a vital role in bringing people together and fostering a cohesive community, making West Hampstead an enjoyable, inclusive, and sustainable neighbourhood. We organise a wide range of activities at our community centre, from Zumba to art classes, from Conversation French to much, much more.

We have a board of Trustees who are volunteers from West Hampstead. Together, they bring a diverse mix of skills and experience to our board, providing governance and strategic oversight of the charity.



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR, VIRGINIA BERRIDGE



CAWH has gone from strength to strength this year. Trustees and staff were pleased to attend a reception at the Palace of Westminster hosted by our MP, Tulip Siddiq, which recognised the role of local community groups like ours.

We have expanded our activities, increased our visibility in the local area through our website, posters, and social media, hosted events ranging from Death cafés to film nights and talks, and successfully kept the organisation operating through grants, fundraising, hall hire and our lottery.

I would like to thank everyone who has made this possible – our users, funders, volunteers, and above all our excellent staff.

OUR IMPACT

CAWH delivers a broad programme of weekly classes, wellbeing activities, community events, and targeted initiatives that support residents' health, confidence, creativity, and social connection.

From fitness and arts programmes to community lunches and children's activities, CAWH continued to provide accessible opportunities for residents of all ages to connect, learn and participate.



PROGRAMME REACH

Key participation figures:

33 weekly classes facilitated

1800+ attendances across classes and events

20 community events

230+ children engaged through CANDY

30+ active volunteers

65% of users coming to the centre weekly



CAWH HIGHLIGHTS

Wellbeing & Connection

- The Warm Hub community lunch initiative recorded 110 attendances, providing residents with regular opportunities for social connection and support during the winter months.
- Strong participation across fitness and wellbeing programmes, with 307 attendances at Zumba, 160+ at Dance for Fitness and seated exercise sessions.

Creativity & Learning

- Creative activities remained highly popular, with 250+ attendances at Art sessions and 140+ at language classes.
- The woodworking programme engaged 80 participants and continued to expand into more advanced, practical, skills-based learning.

Community Engagement

- CAWH strengthened its visibility across West Hampstead by participating in local events, including the Farmers' Market, Jester Festival and community fairs. Talks, film nights, quiz evenings and community activities continued to bring together residents of different ages and backgrounds throughout the year.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH (CANDY) PROJECT

The CANDY programme offers free and affordable creative activities for children, providing a safe and inclusive environment to learn, express themselves, and build confidence.

Programme delivery:

- A free holiday programme spanning 8 weeks, with 3–4 hours of daily activities
- Five after-school sessions per week over 30 weeks
- Activities included arts & crafts, eco club, capoeira, dance and drama, as well as creative workshops such as clay, puppet making, collage, pressed flowers and papier-mâché
- One free community film afternoon

Reach:

Engaged over 230 children from the local community supporting creativity, confidence-building and social connection, while offering accessible opportunities for families in the community.

CAWH plans to expand this initiative by offering free or low-cost sessions for teenagers, ensuring ongoing access to safe, creative, and inclusive activities for young people in West Hampstead.



UNDERSTANDING LOCAL IMPACT AND NEED

In 2025, CAWH carried out a community survey and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) survey to better understand who participates in our activities, the impact of our programmes and where future needs exist.

Key insights

- Over 75% of respondents were aged 50+, with particularly strong engagement among those aged 70+
- More than 65% of respondents attended activities weekly, demonstrating the Centre's role as a regular community hub
- Fitness, arts & crafts, learning and social activities were among the most popular programmes
- Participants reported improved physical health, mental well-being, confidence and reduced loneliness
- Social connection emerged as the strongest reported benefit of participation
- Survey findings also highlighted opportunities to expand engagement among men, teenagers, younger adults and families

Why this matters

West Hampstead and Fortune Green include areas of hidden deprivation, with around 37% of residents living alone and rising demand for accessible community support. CAWH's programmes help reduce isolation, improve wellbeing and strengthen local connections.

FUNDERS



CAWH has no regular core funding. We have to raise funds to keep the organisation going. We are very grateful to our funders, shown here, who have supported our children's programme and our well-being activities for older adults. We are also grateful to two social care providers, Right at Home and Wallfinch, who have supported our dementia work and seated exercise. During the year, we also gained support from new funders, such as the Co-op for our men's work.

COMMUNITY PRESENCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

CAWH's funding enables community-led programmes and activities that would otherwise be unavailable to residents.

We are a visible presence in the local community, with stalls at the annual Jester Festival, the Farmers' Market, street parties and the primary school fair.

Local groups such as the Neighbourhood Development Forum (NDF), West Hampstead Amenity and Transport (WHAT), and the local police safer neighbourhood panel choose to meet at the Centre, an accessible and welcoming space.

Our children's programme is run in partnership with West Hampstead Primary School, and we also work with other local organisations on individual activities. Our talks on local wildlife have led to the formation of a new local network.



WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY: COMMUNITY EVENTS

Participant feedback consistently highlights the importance of CAWH in building confidence, supporting wellbeing and creating opportunities for connection.

Alongside participation figures, personal stories demonstrate the real impact CAWH activities make for residents.



Diana – Community Activities Participant

The centre feels like a family, providing warmth, connection, and daily support that truly impacts people's lives.

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY: ARTS & CRAFTS

Brian & Moira – Art Class

The art sessions are engaging and mentally stimulating, helping us stay creative and energised. Trying new ideas and techniques has encouraged us to keep learning and exploring different ways of drawing. The social interaction and shared creative environment also help us feel connected and motivated.



Kate – Art Class

The class has been both stimulating and relaxing, giving me the opportunity to learn new things and meet new people while taking a welcome break from everyday routines. It has also helped me look at the world differently and observe things from a new perspective. Being part of the class makes me feel more connected to the local community.

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY: EXERCISE & WELLBEING

Ombretta - Chair Exercises & Wellbeing Activities

Participating in the sessions has helped me both physically and mentally, especially after recovering from Covid. The activities provide structure, motivation and encouragement, while the welcoming atmosphere creates a strong sense of community. I always feel supported and energised after attending.



Alan - Film Club & Exercise Sessions

Taking part in the sessions has increased my confidence and strengthened my social connections. The routine of attending regularly and meeting new people makes a real difference to my wellbeing.

WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY: ADULT LEARNING

Ekaterini – ESOL Lessons & Book Club

Attending ESOL lessons and the Book Club has helped me improve my English while also gaining a deeper understanding of UK culture and literature. The welcoming learning environment encourages discussion, curiosity and confidence. It has been a wonderful way to feel more connected to the local community.



Karen – Sewing Group

The sewing group has helped me build confidence in both hand and machine stitching while learning practical new skills. Working on shared projects and exchanging ideas has been very rewarding, and the friendly atmosphere means there is always laughter and encouragement. I feel proud of what I've created and grateful for the friendships formed through the class.

VOLUNTEER VOICE

CAWH has over 30 volunteers who play many roles in the organisation. Some are trustees who also organise events; others run some of our classes, such as the book club, French conversation, and English classes. Our lottery, the 101 Club, is run by a volunteer, and volunteers organised our recent Quiz night. Volunteers help in the office, and there is an active network of volunteers who put up posters advertising our events.

- Over 3,100 volunteer and trustee hours contributed across governance, events, outreach and programme support
- 136 volunteer tutor-led activity hours delivered across community classes and groups
- 60 event delivery hours supporting talks, film nights and community activities
- 877 paid tutor and private hire activity hours delivered at the centre



VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIALS

I love volunteering at the Memory Café. Reading poetry together allows us to share ideas, emotions and memories, creating a real sense of connection and care within the group.

Stephanie, Memory Café Volunteer

Volunteering gives me the opportunity to share my skills, help others and feel connected to the community.

My Thursday sewing group feels like a space to relax, grow and enjoy doing something we love together.

Mar, Sewing Group Volunteer

Volunteering has made me feel part of something worthwhile. Through the Book Club, Film Nights and the 101 Club, I've enjoyed helping shape activities while building friendships and connections within the community.

Geoff, Book Club Volunteer & 101 Club Supporter

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

CAWH doesn't receive core funding that covers all its running costs and salaries, so we have to fundraise continually. We are grateful to our funders, who provide grants for some of our activities. We also raise money ourselves through hall hire, putting on events like the quiz and talks, and through our community lottery, the 101 Club.

Indicative funding impact:

- £60 funds one participant to join the Friday Art Class for a full six-week course.
- £270 funds a cook to run the Community Kitchen for six weeks.
- £360 covers hall hire for Dance for Fitness and Zumba Gold, delivered twice weekly at the 02 Centre over six weeks.
- £240 funds the tutor for seated exercise classes for six weeks.



LOOKING AHEAD

We have come a long way, but there is still much to do.

In the coming year, we would like to:

- Attract more men to our activities
- Expand our children's work to include an older age group and appeal to young girls
- Increase our visibility in the area
- Make our organisation more effective and efficient, given the small number of staff
- Consolidate our volunteer base and integrate volunteers into the organisation
- Above all, put our organisation on a secure financial footing!





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THANK YOU

CAWH would like to thank all participants, volunteers, partners and funders whose support makes this work possible.

