



HWCT STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

Strategic Aims

In its Area of Benefit, HWCT has six strategic aims for the 2025-30 period:

Individual Grants	Focus grantmaking in areas of greatest need and opportunity, including prevention, evidence-based approaches, and strengthening community capacity.
Support organisations to become sustainable and resilient	Provide core and capacity-building funding to help local organisations thrive and adapt in a challenging funding environment.
Ensure equitable access to HWCT funding	Extend outreach and accessibility to smaller organisations and underrepresented and new communities within the Area of Benefit.
Responsive and inclusive grantmaking	Ensure priorities and funding processes reflect the insights and realities of the local communities, grantees, and people with lived experience.
Strengthening impact through learning	Build a light-touch but meaningful framework for gathering insights from grantees to inform future strategy and contribute to shared learning.
Safeguard and steward HWCT's resources responsibly	Maintain a clear focus on risk, income, and governance to protect HWCT's ability to deliver public benefit over the long term.

Needs and Context

HWCT recognises the long-term need for its support of both organisations and individuals. We will continue to review relevant local data and changes in the external environment. Through our partners and grantees, we will also seek to strengthen our understanding of how support organisations contribute to addressing mental and physical health needs, financial hardship, and wellbeing within local communities.

HWCT the organisation

HWCT is an independent charitable Trust, proud of the support that it and its predecessor organisations have provided in the area of benefit. At the same time, HWCT is realistic about the difference it can make with the limited funds it has. The Board recognises that there is always scope to improve HWCT's work and impact and is committed to further diversifying both its membership and those involved in grantmaking to reflect the communities we serve.

To reach people at the edges of our current boundary who are not supported by other local funders, HWCT has reviewed its Area of Benefit and agreed in principle to make a small extension. These changes will only take effect after approval from the Charity Commission is granted.

Grant strategy

The HWCT Board has worked to improve income for distribution to beneficiary organisations and individuals. Trustees are committed to ensuring that HWCT become more proactive in its grant making in order to optimise impact for the Trust's funds. This approach includes:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Seeking a stronger accent on prevention in the purposes of grants made alongside a continuing role for grants focused on mitigation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increasing grants that apply or build on known effective evidence-based interventions for poverty, mental health and physical health. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Supporting grant applications that reinforce and extend community capacity in pursuing health and wellbeing, recognising the need to support organisations who can deliver. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Exploring opportunities to focus funding on priority themes identified by the Board, for example improving support for younger people or addressing emerging community needs. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Take steps to involve local communities, people with lived experience and grant holders more directly in shaping its grantmaking strategy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● While not subsidising statutory services, HWCT will remain attuned to relevant public policy developments, including the NHS 10-Year Plan, particularly where these relate to place-based prevention and digital innovation. |
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These points apply to all HWCT programmes of funding. In terms of organisational funding, the Trust is prepared to support capacity building work for grantee organisations (e.g. organisational development, strengthening governance) and grants for core costs as well as project funding, aiming to support organisations to become more sustainable over time. The Board is open to considering grants for causes that may be less commonly funded elsewhere, provided they fall within HWCT's charitable Objects. Application for organisational grants will be open to non-charitable social organisations (e.g. Community Interest Companies, Community Benefit Societies) whose proposals meet the Trust's purposes.

HWCT's programme of funding

In its Area of Benefit, HWCT has six strategic aims for the 2025-30 period:

Individual Grants	These grants provide direct support to people in acute financial hardship within HWCT's Area of Benefit, helping them meet essential needs and improve quality of life. Where HWCT provides funding for individual grants, this support should form part of a broader package of assistance offered by the referring organisation, ensuring grants are aligned with HWCT's strategy and delivered as part of integrated, wraparound services.
Pensioners	The Board has agreed that there will be no new entrants to the pensioners group and that the grant level will not increase.
Smaller Grants for organisations	The Board recognises the value of small grants in supporting local organisations and community-led initiatives. During this strategy period, we will explore ways to further develop our small grants programme so that it is more accessible to a broad range of organisations, better aligned with our updated strategic priorities, and reflective of local needs. We are also interested in approaches that encourage collaboration and community participation.
Larger grants for organisations	HWCT has provided a small number of multi-year grants in the past, but we do not currently provide multi-year funding as part of our standard programme. During this strategy period, we will explore whether longer-term support may be appropriate in some circumstances, based on clear evidence of need, strong alignment with our mission, and the availability of resources. Any future use of multi-year grants would be selective and carefully assessed, to ensure we retain the flexibility needed to respond to changing community needs.

Emerging priorities

The Board recognises that to ensure relevance and fairness in its funding, HWCT will listen to and collaborate with those closest to the challenges it seeks to address.

As part of a learning based strategy, an element of funding will be directed towards needs and approaches that have not previously been supported. In its decision-making process, the Board values both expert research, including through Advisers to the Board, and grassroots knowledge and insights, particularly in mental health, food security and homelessness.

The Board expects that, at an appropriate point during this strategy period it will adopt a more proactive focus on a limited number of thematic areas, while continuing to support a wide range of applications that fall within its charitable Objects. In the future, the Board may choose to consider whether to carve out a formal pot of funding for certain initiatives.

Measuring success

The Board wishes to ensure that there is a proportionate approach adopted in the data gathering and reporting required of grantees, particularly those organisations receiving lower levels of funding. At the same time, the Board seeks a simple accessible system for measuring the impact of its grant giving, focusing on learning from grant recipients themselves.

The Trust will require that such grantees show how annual organisational Key Performance Indicators are being met in order for a multi-year grantee to continue to receive a grant in the following year. Building on learning from this exercise, the Board will consider how to extend this process of assessment to a select group of recipient organisations of larger grants from HWCT.

Strategy implementation

The Board will continue its work on implementation of this strategy within the framework of the adopted strategy.

October 2025