

Headway London

5 Year Strategic Priorities

2026 – 2031



A growing **community**, rooted in lived experience

1. Grow What We Have and Share It Thoughtfully

Our work in East London has been shaped over years by the people who walk through our doors: their stories, their ideas, and their humour. Before anything else, we'll keep strengthening what already exists here. That means nurturing our teams, deepening the roles of people with lived experience across the organisation, and making sure our centre, the hub of our activity, stays a place where people feel grounded, supported and proud to belong.

As we grow, we won't simply "copy and paste" the East London model elsewhere. Instead, we'll plant the seeds of what works here and support new communities to grow something that feels true to them. Our first step will be South East London. In 2026, we will establish a new community day centre that reflects local culture, local needs and the voices of people with brain injury in that part of the city. The learning from this will shape how we support other under-served areas in the future.





Submit To Love Studios is our thriving art studio, home to over 40 artists

2. Build Relationships Across London

Our ambition to become Headway London is not about taking over the city; it's about recognising the work we already do well beyond East London and being clear about our commitment to increasing support in under-served parts of the capital. This shift in identity; co-designed with members, families and staff, alongside our programme of expansion, will raise awareness of the realities of brain injury and begin to address the stark inequalities in access to specialist, community-based services across London.

We'll also strengthen relationships with other Headway groups across London and the UK. We'll learn from them, share what we know, and offer support where it's wanted. We are at our best when we're in conversation, not in competition



3. Make Access to Brain Injury Support Fairer for Londoners

No one's future should depend on their postcode, yet right now it does. Over the next five years we'll work with local authorities, NHS teams and grassroots organisations to identify where people are missing out on vital support. Together, we'll build multi-year partnerships across London boroughs, designing pathways that help people get the right help at the right time.

We'll also stretch ourselves to connect with communities who rarely find their way to us: faith groups, migrant communities, people experiencing homelessness, and those who don't see themselves in the services currently on offer. This isn't about expanding our reach for the sake of growth; it's about making sure nobody falls through the cracks.



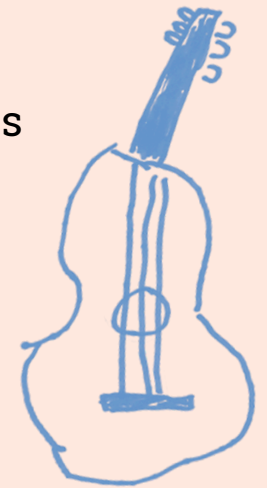


The Headway London music group in full swing

4. Grow Our Specialist Projects, Keeping Their Magic

Our Art Studio, Kitchen Project and Music programme are often the heartbeat of someone's week. They help people rediscover who they are, make new memories, and do things they never thought possible again. We want more people to have access to that.

Over the next five years we'll support our project leads to deepen these programmes here in East London and find ways to bring them to new settings. Any replication will be shaped with care, co-designed with members and local partners, and flexible enough to respond to the character of each new community. The focus is on sharing possibility, not exporting a formula.





Members of our Kitchen Project cook lunch for the community each day

5. Build a Future That's Financially Strong and True to Our Values

For over 25 years, Headway London has operated as a trusted, community-led charity supporting people affected by brain injury. As we expand into a multi-site organisation, we will continue building on our hard-earned financial resilience to secure the long-term stability of our work. This includes maintaining value for money in our service delivery, developing new funding partnerships, strengthening our budgeting and forecasting tools, and creating more opportunities for members to be paid for the work they contribute across the organisation.

Our finances will never be separate from our values: the decisions we make will always centre on the community we serve, and we will continue to grow at a prudent pace that keeps the organisation safe, grounded and sustainable.





Members of our Conference Steering Group presenting their own stories and experiences

6. Create a Research and Learning Hub Powered by Lived Experience

We know that what happens at Headway London changes lives, and we want to understand it better, share it more widely, and influence the wider system that people have to navigate after a brain injury. Over the next five years we will develop a research and learning hub shaped and led by people with lived experience of brain injury.

Research won't sit on the sidelines. It will be practical, accessible, and part of how we make sure our work remains relevant, evidence-informed and driven by the voices of our members.

This hub will help us to:

- contribute to the wider conversation about rehabilitation, community support and co-produced care
- work with universities, NHS partners and community groups to explore what really makes recovery meaningful
- evaluate our model as it grows, ensuring we stay accountable to the people at the heart of it
- support other organisations to learn from our approach so they can grow their own versions, in their own way





Artwork by Errol Drysdale

To Find Out More...

To find out more about Headway London and our progress towards our goals, visit [headwaylondon.org](https://www.headwaylondon.org)

You can also follow us on social media

 Instagram - @headway.london
- @submittolovestudios

 LinkedIn - headway-london

Or email us: info@headwaylondon.org

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Artwork by Sam Jevon