Black Thrive Global

Impact Report

2024 – 2025

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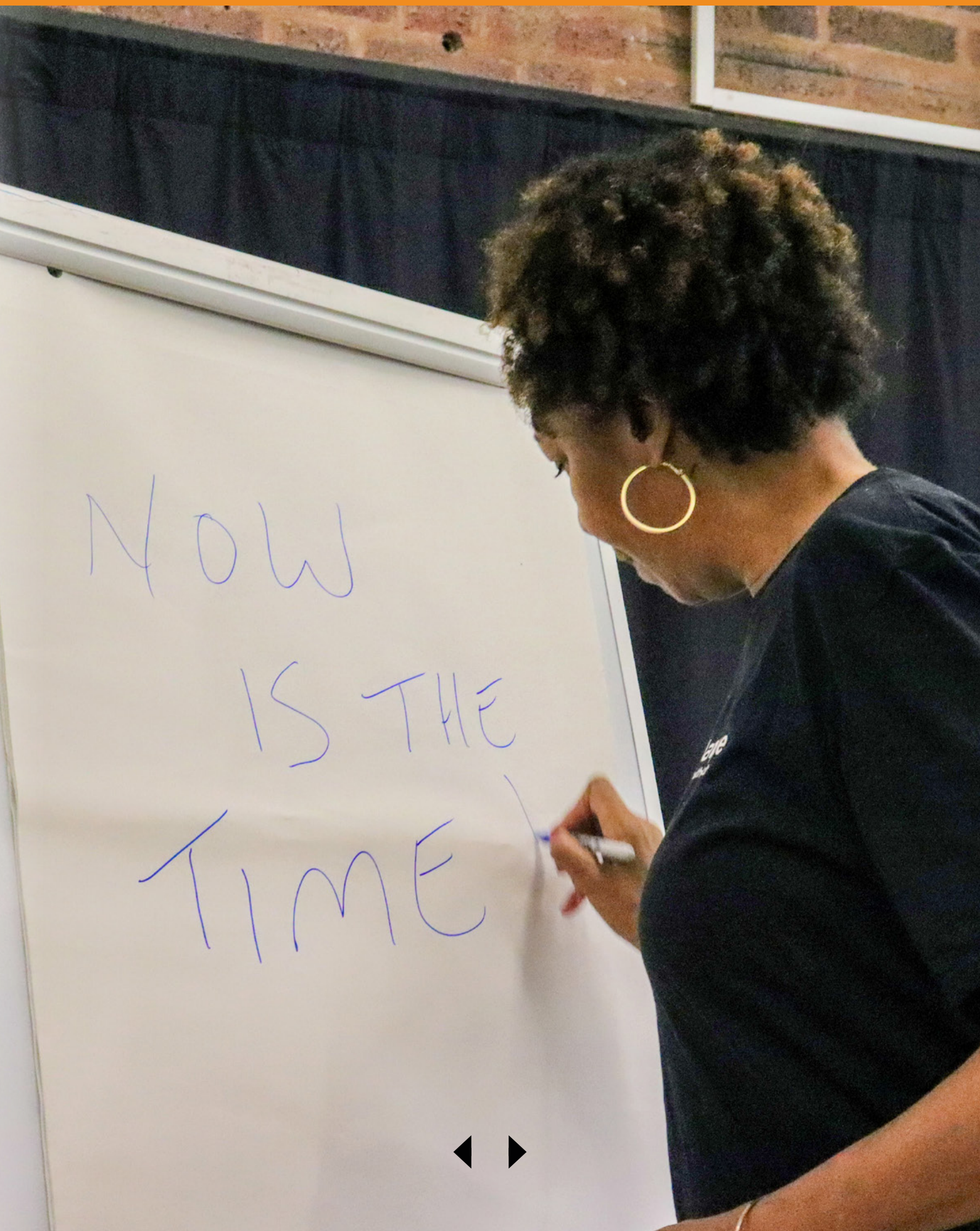
Acknowledgements

Black Thrive Global extends our sincere thanks to the organisations whose support and partnership made our work in 2024/25 possible. Their support and commitment have enabled us to advance racial equity, strengthen community leadership, generate evidence, and drive systems change to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities.

We would like to acknowledge the support and partnership of:

- City Bridge Foundation
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Impact on Urban Health
- Just Like Us
- King's College London
- Lambeth HEART
- Maudsley Charity
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- South East London Integrated Care Board
- South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
- Southbank Centre
- The National Lottery Community Fund, and National Lottery players for making this funding possible
- Thrive LDN

We recognise that meaningful systems change is only possible through collaboration. We thank all those who have worked alongside us in pursuit of thriving Black communities and a more equitable future for all.


NOW
IS THE
TIME

A Year of Deepening Roots and Strengthening Systems Change

Executive Summary

During the 2024–2025 reporting period, Black Thrive Global (BTG) continued to strengthen its role as a national, Black-led systems change organisation working to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities. Operating as the "backbone of backbones," BTG supported its localities in Lambeth, Birmingham, and Haringey to move beyond service delivery and deepen their influence across policy, healthcare, and community systems.

Across the year, BTG focused on embedding sustainable infrastructure for racial equity through community-led action, evidence-based practice, and strategic partnerships. This approach enabled Black communities to shape decisions that affect their lives, while holding institutions to account for delivering equitable and culturally responsive services.

Key Impact Highlights

Policy and Systems Influence

BTG's research, lived experience expertise, and advocacy contributed to national and regional policy conversations, including engagement with the Mental Health Bill and the London Race Action Plan, ensuring Black voices were represented in ongoing consultation and development processes. Through community assemblies, Independent Advisory Groups, and strategic partnerships, Black voices were centred in discussions on policing, healthcare, and public service reform.

Advancing Healthcare Equity

Through NHS England's Culture of Care programme, BTG delivered anti-racism training to 354 NHS professionals across inpatient and leadership settings. Lived Experience Advisors played a central role in shaping training, change ideas, and review frameworks, ensuring that service user perspectives remained at the heart of systems improvement.

Community Reach and Storytelling

BTG strengthened its public engagement through digital communications and storytelling. Instagram engagement grew by 33%, while docufilms such as SICKLE reached over 2,500 viewers nationwide, raising awareness of racialised health inequalities and influencing professional practice.

354 **NHS Staff Trained**

2,500+ **Docufilm viewers**

33% **Increased Engagement**

165 **Young people reached**

Storytelling remained a key tool for transforming lived experience into evidence for change.

Youth and Community Empowerment

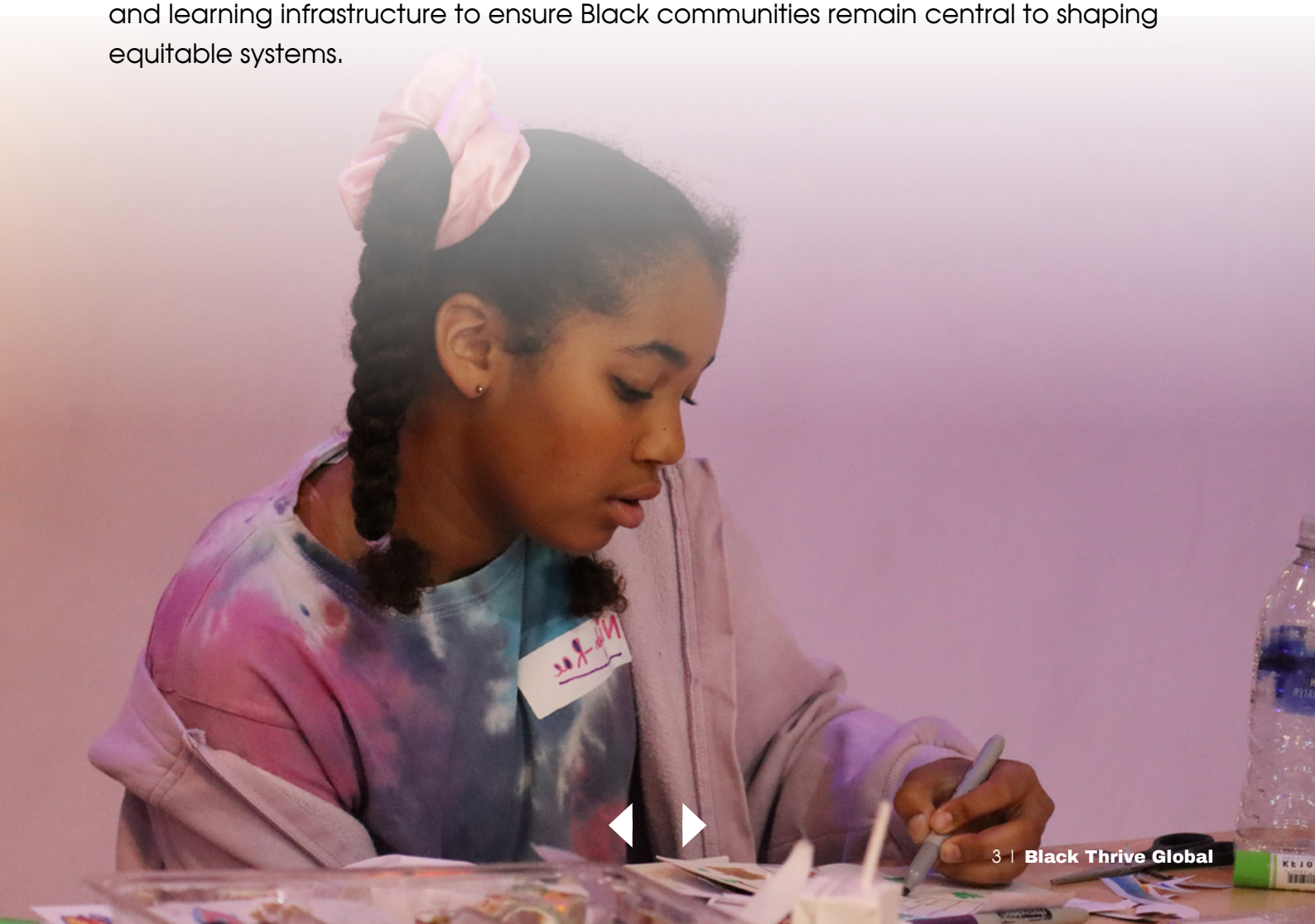
In Lambeth, 165 young people co-produced the Thrive & Vibe wellbeing programme through the Children in Need - Young Researchers Project. The Youth Collective, launched with the Southbank Centre, created new pathways for young people to shape arts and wellbeing provision. In Haringey, the Time2Heal App was developed as a culturally grounded digital resource to support healing and wellbeing journeys.

Financial Stability and Sustainability

Black Thrive Global maintained financial resilience with a turnover of approximately £2.24 million. Despite the end of several large restricted grants, unrestricted income increased to £772,000, reflecting successful diversification of income streams. Organisational reserves grew to £556,000, exceeding the level required by the reserves policy and strengthening long-term sustainability.

Looking Ahead

Building on the foundations laid during 2024–2025, Black Thrive Global will continue to strengthen community-led systems change across its localities while preparing for the next strategic phase of national expansion. Future priorities include deepening community assemblies, developing leadership capacity, and strengthening research and learning infrastructure to ensure Black communities remain central to shaping equitable systems.



Who we are

Black Thrive Global is a Black-led systems change organisation dedicated to transforming the structural conditions that negatively impact the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities. Our mission is grounded in addressing the long-standing inequities produced by racism and inequality, while building environments in which Black people are not only able to survive, but can thrive.

Through our place-based partnerships in Lambeth, Haringey, and Birmingham, alongside our national programmes and the work of our Research Institute and Observatory, we continue to centre lived experience, strengthen accountability within systems, and create meaningful opportunities for Black communities to lead decision-making.

Our approach is rooted in collaboration, evidence, and a deep commitment to community power. This Impact Report reflects the progress made across our localities and workstreams. It highlights the learning emerging from our partnerships, the influence of community-led action, and the ongoing work required to advance racial equity and improve outcomes for Black communities across the UK.

A letter from our CEO

"Over the past year, Black Thrive Global (BTG) and its localities in Lambeth, Birmingham, and Haringey have continued to advance their mission to dismantle structural inequalities and improve the mental health, wellbeing, and life outcomes of Black communities across the UK. Guided by a vision of community-led, equity-driven systems change, the organisation delivered impactful programmes grounded in co-production, learning, and deep community engagement. The Thriving Futures – Growing Great Ideas programme marked a pivotal year of reflection, experimentation, and model-building. Working closely with Place Matters, BTG strengthened a culture of collective learning through a new Learning Log/ Memory System and Reflective Learning Workshops.

Community Assemblies remained a cornerstone, bringing together stakeholders across Lambeth, Haringey, and Birmingham to influence priorities ranging from mental health equity to local NHS strategy. Tools including the updated Stop & Search Dashboard, the Time2Heal wellbeing application, and Birmingham's Theory of Race Equity Systems Change, have reinforced evidence-informed approaches. Storytelling was central, with the Thriving Futures Docufilm and Project Heal films capturing lived experiences and galvanising public engagement.

Looking ahead, these achievements lay the foundation for the upcoming five-year Thriving Futures – Scaling Systems Change initiative funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. This next phase will expand Community Assemblies nationally, develop a Leadership Academy, and grow research and knowledge hubs to shift narratives and influence systems at scale.

Across Lambeth, Black Thrive delivered high impact workstreams. The Children, Young People, and Families programme progressed the Children in Need research, launched the Roots to Wings trauma-informed school toolkit, and advanced major partnerships with SEL ICB and Southbank. The Communities workstream fostered visibility and cohesion through events, resident engagement, and assemblies.

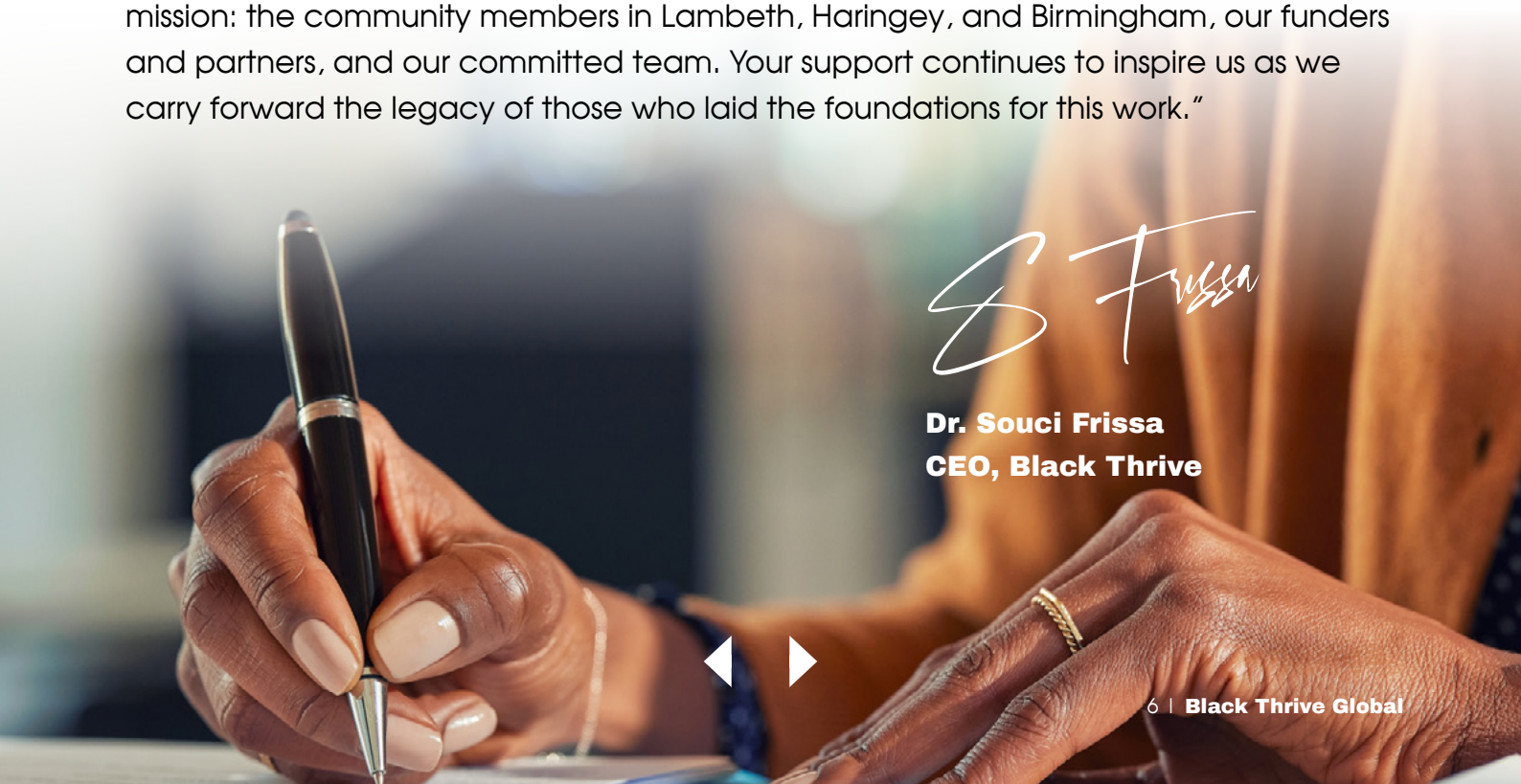
The Independent Advisory Group strengthened PCREF implementation across South London through governance, accountability, and race equity training, while the Black Queer & Thriving programme expanded across three boroughs, delivering research, community organising, events, and partnerships to support Black LGBTQ+ wellbeing.

The CAPSA programme continued to provide culturally relevant peer support and advocacy for mental health service users, offering both inpatient and community-based support, contributing to national research, and informing local and national practice improvements. BTG also played a leadership role in NHS England's Culture of Care programme, delivering race equity training to over 350 participants.

BTG's Research Institute advanced developmental evaluation for PCREF in SLaM, supported anti-racism initiatives, strengthened internal research literacy, and developed organisation-wide evaluation tools. Collaborations such as the Lambeth HEART partnership deepened links between community insight and local policy. BTG submitted written evidence to Parliament on the Mental Health Bill 2025, supporting the inclusion of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF). The submission emphasises that statutory implementation of PCREF is essential to ensure consistency, accountability, and long-term impact.

Together, these achievements reflect BTG's commitment to building infrastructures of hope, healing, and collective leadership, ensuring Black communities are not merely surviving but thriving.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to all who have contributed to Black Thrive's mission: the community members in Lambeth, Haringey, and Birmingham, our funders and partners, and our committed team. Your support continues to inspire us as we carry forward the legacy of those who laid the foundations for this work."



Dr. Souci Frissa
CEO, Black Thrive

Global Black Thrive THRIVING FUTURES

Thriving Futures (TF) is a strategic arm of Black Thrive Global (BTG), serving as the "backbone of backbones" for the Black Thrive Collective, which includes Black Thrive Lambeth, Black Thrive Haringey, and Black Thrive Birmingham. Through this collective, BTG supports place-based initiatives that tackle structural inequalities in mental health and beyond, advancing Black community-led systems change.

The Thriving Futures – Growing Great Ideas (GGI) programme (July 2024–June 2025) represented the fourth and final year of this work. It was a crucial phase in deepening reflection, learning, and strategic coherence across the network.

Funded through the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF), the programme aimed to create transferable, scalable models for systemic change rooted in co-production, trust, and equity.

Working with Place Matters as the learning partner, Thriving Futures developed and embedded mechanisms that enabled each locality to translate community voice into strategy, influence, and impact.

Building Reflective and Learning Cultures

A defining feature of Thriving Futures was its commitment to reflective practice. The Learning Memory System, co-developed with Place Matters, established structured processes for documenting insights and shaping operational priorities.

Complementary Reflective Learning Workshops further supported collaboration and skill-sharing across teams and localities, strengthening the Collective's capacity for evidence-informed adaptation.

These mechanisms encouraged partners to pause, reflect, and refine their approaches to ensure that learning informed practice at every level. Embedding this reflective culture normalised openness, improved communication, and helped shape the emerging design of the next strategic phase: Scaling Systems Change.

Strengthening Community Voice

The Community Assemblies (CA) model remained a cornerstone of Thriving Futures, providing culturally affirming, intergenerational spaces where residents, grassroots organisations, and statutory stakeholders could collaborate as equals.

Across Lambeth, Haringey, and Birmingham, these assemblies convened between 100–150 participants each, surfacing insights that influenced local and regional priorities. Examples include:

- Lambeth's Assembly: Brought together community organisations such as Healthwatch Lambeth, Age UK, and women in prison, in addition to valuable community members, to help shape the scope of work that BTL focused on.
- Haringey's Assembly: Hosted the borough's first Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) workshop, giving residents a direct voice in shaping NHS equity priorities.
- Birmingham's UBUNTU Coalition: Informed the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust's five-year plan, demonstrating the power of Black-led collaboration to influence institutional strategy.

The development of the Community Assemblies Framework with Place Matters provided a replicable structure for inclusive decision-making, now positioned as a transferable model for other regions.

Shifting Narratives through Storytelling and Research

Storytelling and evidence co-production were instrumental in transforming how Black experiences are represented and understood. Through initiatives like Project Heal, the Thriving Futures Docufilm, and the SICKLE documentary (commissioned by the NHS Red Cell Network), The Thriving Futures Collective highlighted lived experiences of trauma, healing, and justice while challenging systemic neglect and institutional bias.

Simultaneously, the programme advanced a new approach to research and knowledge generation. Efforts such as the Stop & Search Dashboard, the Time2Heal App, and the Race Equity System Theory of Change in Birmingham expanded the understanding of how community-defined metrics and qualitative insights can inform service design and accountability.

These activities collectively reinforced BTG's leadership in decolonising the evidence landscape, ensuring Black communities not only contribute data but define what counts as knowledge.

What's Next: Scaling Systems Change (2025–2026)

Ambitions for National Systems Transformation

Scaling Systems Change (SSC) marks a major step forward in BTG's mission to embed Black community-led approaches across the UK. Building directly on the learning, tools, and frameworks developed through Thriving Futures and the GGI programme, SSC aims to expand tested models into new regions, including Wales and Scotland, and strengthen national collaboration on race equity and wellbeing.

While the core localities remain central to the model, SSC will broaden the impact of BTG's work through four strategic pillars:

1. Strengthening Community Voice through Assemblies: SSC will scale the Community Assemblies model nationally, applying learning from existing localities to diverse regional contexts. Assemblies will continue to offer culturally rooted, co-produced spaces where community members influence policy, service design, and accountability structures. Key priorities for 2025–26 include:

- Expanding community assemblies with tailored regional frameworks.
- Strengthening partnerships with statutory bodies to embed assembly insights into decision-making.
- Developing robust feedback mechanisms to ensure ongoing community influence on policy.

2. Developing Leadership Capacity: A major innovation in the next phase is the expansion of the Leadership Academy, previously piloted internally, into an external training programme. The Leadership Academy will equip Black leaders across public, voluntary, and community sectors with the skills and tools needed to challenge systemic barriers and drive equitable systems reform. In 2025–26, the Academy will:

- Deliver two national pilot cohorts with participants from health, education, and justice sectors.
- Build a peer learning network to support collaboration among emerging Black leaders.
- Develop accredited training modules on co-production, systems thinking, and race equity leadership.

3. Expanding Research, Learning, and Knowledge Systems: The Knowledge Hub will evolve into a national platform for research, data, and learning exchange. By combining qualitative storytelling with community-defined metrics, BTG will continue to challenge conventional norms in evidence and evaluation. Key ambitions include:

- Establishing a Shared Measurement System (SMS) co-designed with communities and institutions.
- Expanding the Research Clubs model to connect local researchers, activists, and policymakers.
- Providing training and analytical support to academic, medical, governmental, and VCSE partners to embed equitable practice in research and service design.

This strand also ensures that reflective learning remains embedded through tools like the Learning Memory Logs and Reflective Learning Workshops, ensuring ongoing adaptation and innovation.

4. Operationalising Methodologies for Transferability and Scale: SSC will codify and disseminate BTG's proven frameworks to enable wider replication of its approach. Drawing on the lessons of Thriving Futures – Growing Great Ideas, this work will focus on:

- Creating adaptable templates for community engagement, storytelling, and systems change.
- Establishing structured partnership pathways for organisations seeking to embed BTG's model.
- Ensuring sustainability through long-term investment in co-production, equity, and trust-based collaboration.

Looking Ahead

The Scaling Systems Change initiative embodies BTG's strategic evolution, from place-based transformation to national systems leadership.

By institutionalising co-production, reflective practice, and community evidence, the programme seeks to redefine how public systems respond to and are held accountable by Black communities.

In 2025–26, BTG will continue to act as a national convenor and knowledge partner, working with funders, government bodies, and community organisations to create the conditions for lasting systemic change.

The vision is clear: a future in which Black communities are not just consulted but lead, shaping systems that are equitable, inclusive, and rooted in lived experience.

Photo: Kabila Haile

Research Institute and Observatory

Photo: Sincerely Media

The Black Thrive Research Institute and Observatory (RIO), established in 2021, exists to address racial inequalities in healthcare and health outcomes, with a particular focus on mental health and wellbeing for Black communities. RIO was created in response to a longstanding gap in the research landscape: the absence of Black-led institutions producing evidence that explicitly names and examines racism and racialisation as structural features of nation states and their institutions.

At Black Thrive, we recognise that ending racial inequality requires a constellation of approaches. Central to this is the presence of a Black-led research institute that makes Black communities' experiences visible, credible, and influential within policy, practice, and public debate. RIO's work is grounded in the understanding that racism is not incidental, but embedded within systems, and must therefore be examined, challenged, and dismantled through rigorous, anti-racist research.

RIO focuses on generating high-quality data and evidence through a Black lens and translating this evidence into anti-racist policies, interventions, and systems change. Our ambition is to become an authoritative Black voice on research and research methodologies, setting standards for what meaningful, ethical, and community-rooted data looks like.

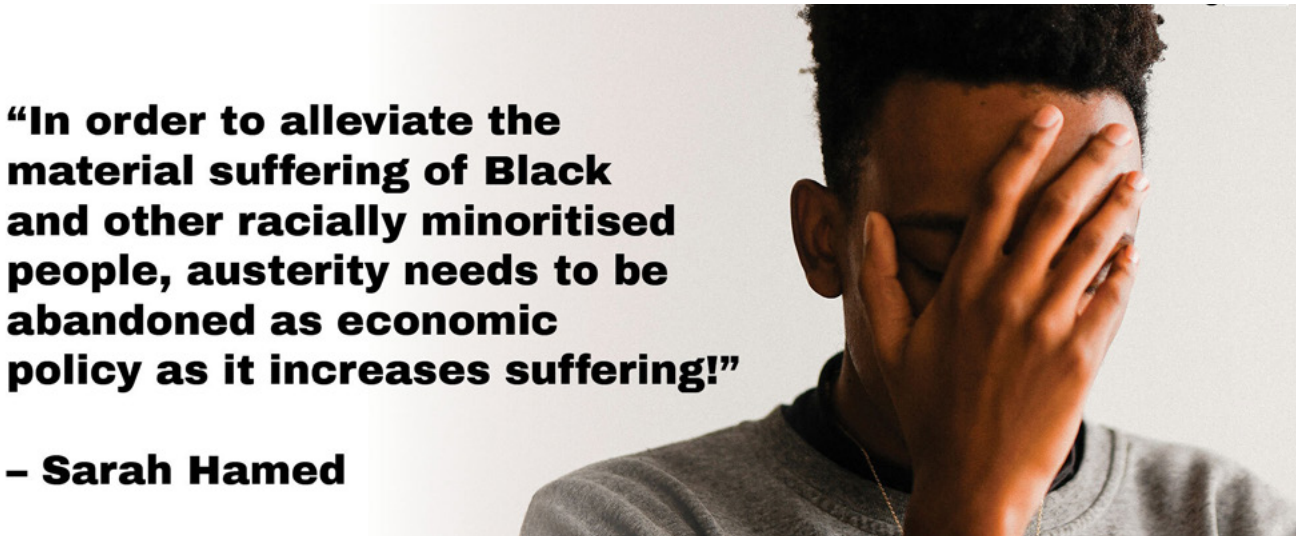
This work is delivered through close collaboration and co-production with Black Thrive Global's workstreams and localities, as well as partnerships with academic institutions, policymakers, and research bodies in the UK and internationally. Alongside this, RIO builds internal research capacity across Black Thrive by providing training, guidance, and tools that ensure research is conducted with scientific rigour, ethical integrity, and community accountability.

Publications

Over the reporting year, RIO increased its publication output across both non-academic and academic platforms. To ensure accessibility and reach beyond academic audiences, we introduced a three-month blog series addressing urgent political and public issues related to racial inequality. These publications contribute to public debate while strengthening the evidence base needed to challenge colourblind policy approaches.

Blogs Published

The Persistence of Racism in Mental Healthcare in the UK examines how racial inequalities in mental health care continue to be produced through colourblind policies and practices, highlighting the need for approaches that explicitly address structural racism Draws on lived experience to explore discriminatory policing practices and the importance of co-produced accountability frameworks, aligning with Black Thrive's commitment to community-led systems change.



Cuts to Mental Health Services, Austerity, Racism and Beyond explores how austerity measures, alongside colourblind policy frameworks, have intensified racial disparities in mental health services and outcomes for Black communities.

Peer-Reviewed Academic Publications

In collaboration with academics and research institutions across Europe, RIO has continued to expand its peer-reviewed academic output. These publications strengthen the evidence base on racism in healthcare and contribute to international research and policy conversations.

- Osman, F., Ternström, E., Bodin, M., & Hamed, S. (2025). The epistemic injustice of racialised maternal care. Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare. Highlights persistent racial inequalities in maternal health, framing them as epistemic injustice and calling for anti-racist interventions.
- Bradby, H., Thapar-Björkert, S., Ahlberg, B. M., & Hamed, S. (2025). Challenges of researching racism in healthcare. Journal of Critical Public Health. Explores methodological and political challenges faced when researching racism in healthcare contexts.
- Arcilla, J. T., Nanou, A., Hamed, S., & Osman, F. (2025). Racialised migrant women's discrimination in maternal care: A scoping review. International Journal for Equity in Health. Reviews global evidence on racism and discrimination experienced by racialised migrant women in maternal care.
- Alinia, M., Hamed, S., et al. (2024). Coloniality, whiteness and systemic racism in Sweden: An email conversation. In Decolonial Sweden. Routledge. Examines colourblindness and the denial of racism as mechanisms that reproduce inequality.
- Hamed, S., & Ahlberg, B. M. (2024). Decolonizing Swedish health care: Challenges and ways forward. In Decolonial Sweden. Routledge. Discusses the challenges of researching and addressing racism within healthcare systems.
- Hamed, S., Bradby, H., Thapar-Björkert, S., & Ahlberg, B. M. (2024). Healthcare staff's racialised talk: The perpetuation of racism in healthcare. Social Science & Medicine. Analyses how racialised narratives within healthcare characterise racially minoritised patients as undeserving of care.
- Odzakovic, E., Raphael-Grimm, T., Falck, J., Hamed, S., et al. (2025). International Learning Initiative Part 2: Enhancing antiracism awareness among nursing students in Sweden and the USA. Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences. Examines the use of case studies as a method for teaching nursing students about racism.
- Aisha, M., Hamed, S., et al. (2026, forthcoming). Black youth's experiences of Stop and Search in South London. International Journal for Equity in Health. Explores the impact of Stop and Search on Black young people's everyday lives and mental health.

Building Research Capacity Across Black Thrive

As part of Black Thrive Global's learning weeks, RIO delivered interactive research training sessions aimed at strengthening research knowledge and capacity across workstreams. Training covered research methodologies, qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, and the fundamentals of research-based evaluation.

RIO also facilitated sessions exploring theories of race, racism, and racialisation, and is currently developing shared definitions of key concepts to support clarity and consistency across Black Thrive's work.

To strengthen research rigour and ethical practice, RIO led work to ensure GDPR compliance across research activity. This included the development of standardised research templates, such as participant information sheets, consent forms, and evaluation frameworks, to support consistent practice across the organisation.

Collaborative Efforts with Other Workstreams

RIO has worked closely with internal workstreams to support research design, delivery, and evaluation, including:

- **School Engagement Programme (South East London):**
  In partnership with the Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) workstream, RIO supported interview design, data collection, and analysis to inform improvements in mental health support for Black and mixed-heritage pupils.
- **Children in Need Programme:**
  Collaborated with CYPF to co-produce all research processes with participating children, resulting in a collaborative report addressing wellbeing and identity among Black and mixed-heritage children in Lambeth.

External Partnerships and Collaborations

Looking ahead, RIO will continue to expand its research and evaluation work, including:

- **Paul Hamlyn Foundation:**
  Awarded a two-year research grant to support organisational research capacity, including the introduction of Avidnote AI and attendance at an international conference on bias in AI data analysis.
- **Culture of Care:**
  Supported the design, delivery, and evaluation of Race Equity training in collaboration with the Royal College of Psychiatry.
- **Wellcome Mental Health Infulencing Project:**
  Contributing to data, evidence, and policy engagement workstreams with a focus on racism and mental health
- **Lambeth HEART:**
  Formalised collaboration through a partnership agreement and secured funding, with the Head of Research and Evaluation joining the board
- **Academic Collaboration:**
  Ongoing research with the University of Roehampton examining how racialised and gendered stop and search practices affect the mental health of Black communities in London

Upcoming RIO Projects and Collaborations

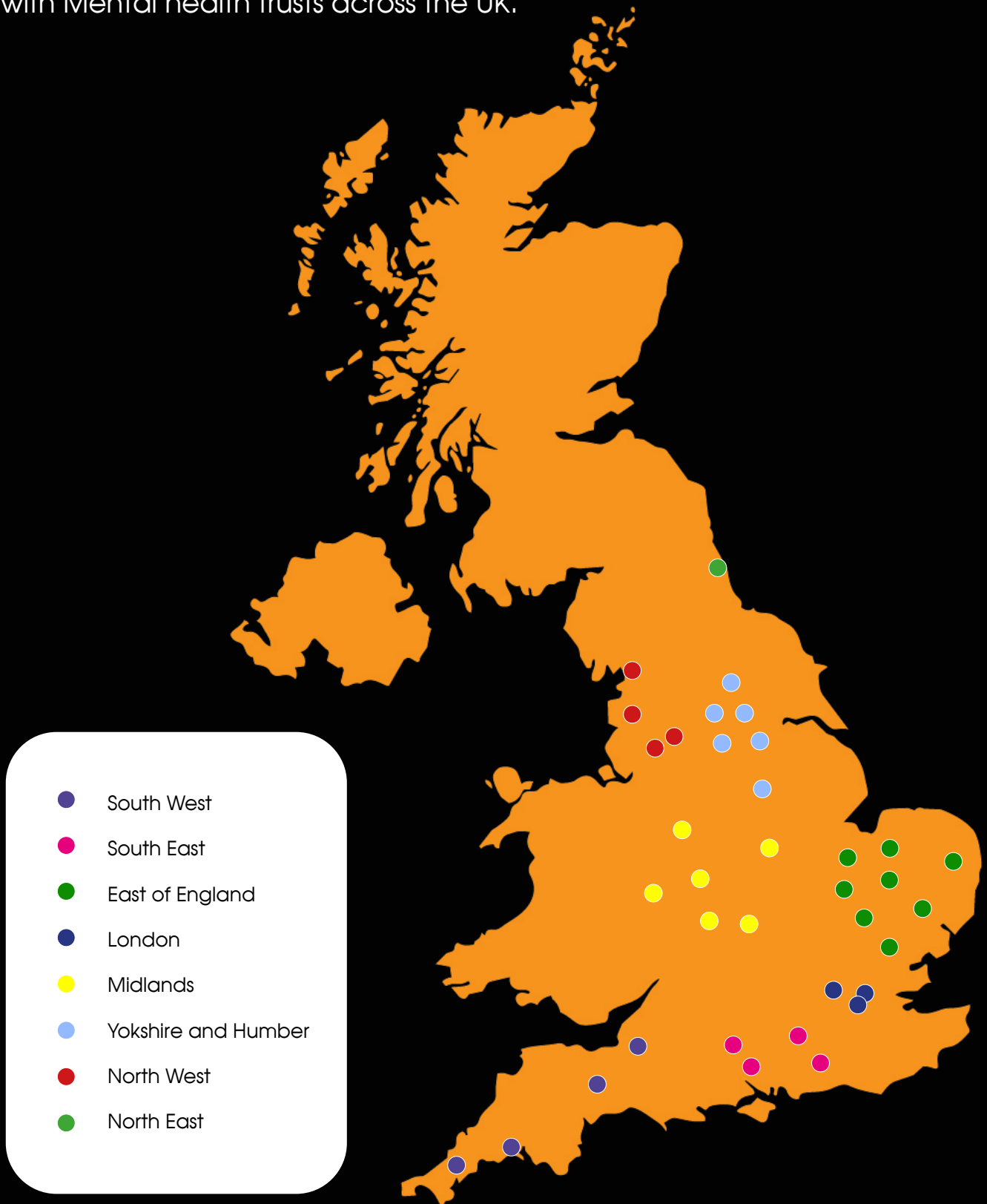
Looking ahead, RIO will continue to expand its research and evaluation work, including:

- Community Engagement in Health Research Project (2026): A qualitative study exploring how Black communities in Lambeth experience and perceive community engagement in health research..
- Thriving Futures: Scaling Systems Change: Providing research guidance to support community assemblies and evidence generation.
- London Mental Health and Climate Coalition: Supporting qualitative data collection and analysis for a London-wide climate action infrastructure.
- Evaluations: Completion of the PCREF Pilot Year Evaluation (Summer 2025), development of an evaluation framework for the SLaM Anti-Racism Plan, and work to re-imagine Equality Impact Assessments in partnership with HSE CARE.

Culture of Care

Black Thrive played a central role in advancing the aims of NHS England's Culture of Care (CoC) programme, delivering anti-racism training, embedding lived experience, and developing tools to support systems-level change across mental health inpatient settings.

The Culture of Care programme has supported organisations across multiple regions. This map demonstrates our geographical footprint and the scale of engagement, with each pin representing an area where we have delivered Race Equity support and built partnerships with Mental health trusts across the UK.



Delivery of Anti-Racism Training

Black Thrive designed and delivered targeted anti-racism training to a range of audiences across the Culture of Care programme. Between August 2024 and June 2025, a total of 354 participants took part in training sessions delivered by the team.

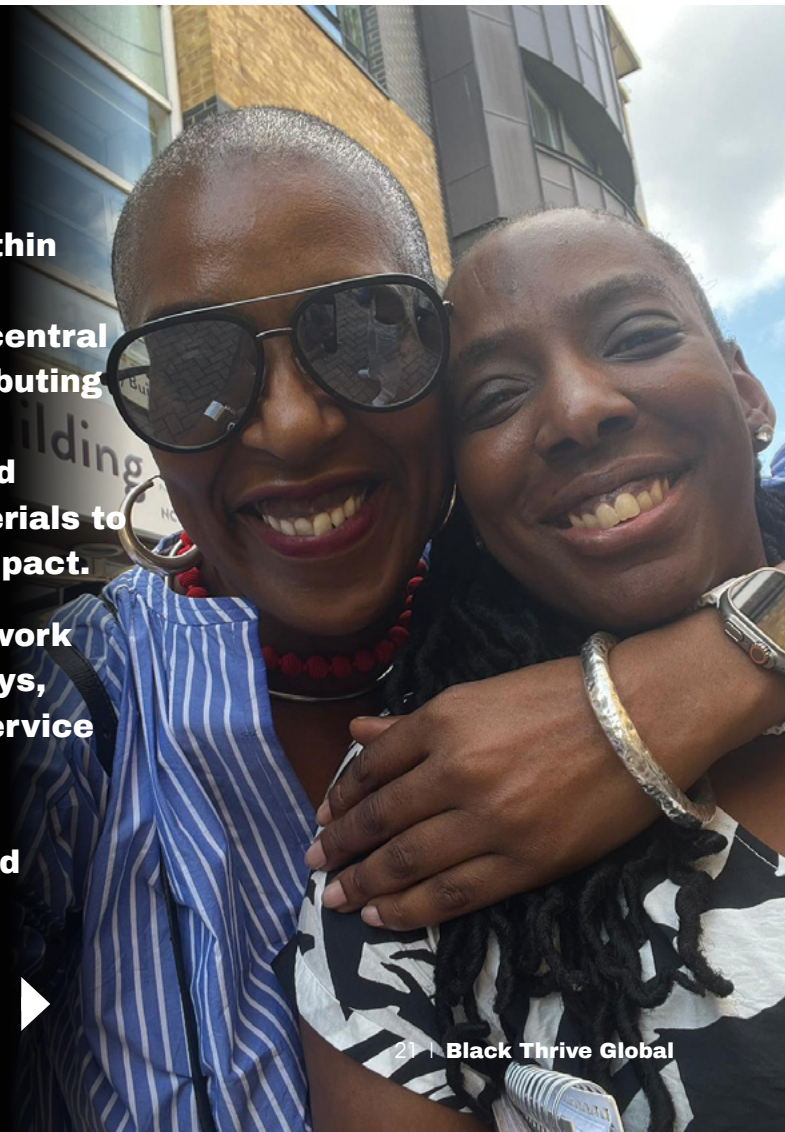
Training Session	Date	Attendees
In-Person Training	**2 August 2024**	**34**
Virtual Training	**13 December 2024**	**37**
Ward Training	**7 March 2025**	**122**
Ward Training	**6 May 2025**	**113**
Executive Training	**5 June 2025**	**48**

Training sessions were tailored to meet the needs of different audiences, including frontline ward staff, executive leaders, and programme-wide participants. Each session focused on building understanding of racial inequities in mental health inpatient care and equipping participants with practical tools to recognise, challenge, and address racism within their roles and organisations.

Embedding Lived Experience

Lived experience remained a core principle of Black Thrive's delivery within the Culture of Care programme. Lived Experience Advisors (LEAs) played a central role in shaping the programme, contributing to the development of change ideas, informing race equity review tools, and supporting the design of training materials to ensure relevance, authenticity, and impact.

LEAs also contributed to learning network events, debrief sessions, and away days, helping to ensure that the voices of service users and carers remained central to programme reflection, learning, and improvement. This approach reinforced the importance of co-production as a foundation for meaningful and sustainable systems change.



Supporting Systems–Level Change

Alongside direct delivery, Black Thrive contributed to longer-term structural change through the design and development of new tools and organisational support offers.

Key areas of work included:

- **Race Equity Ward Reviews**
  A comprehensive framework has been developed to support structured reviews of inpatient wards. Pilot reviews are scheduled to begin in September 2025, with one trust participating in each of the five learning networks. These reviews will be supported by the research team to ensure robust data collection and the generation of actionable insights.
- **Organisational-Level Support**
  A new organisational offer has been developed, comprising two virtual anti-racism training sessions for broad audiences and sixteen in-person sessions delivered across NHS organisations. Commencing in September 2025, this offer is designed to influence leadership behaviours and support the embedding of equitable practice across systems.
- **Additional Contributions**
  Black Thrive also supported a range of wider programme priorities, including the development of case studies for organisational sessions, the review and refinement of change ideas in collaboration with partners, and planning support for the National Learning Set.

Strategic Impact

Through this work, Black Thrive has made a visible and measurable contribution to NHS England's Culture of Care programme.

Our delivery reached 354 participants, strengthened the integration of lived experience across design and delivery, and supported the development of tools and approaches that will be implemented nationally.

Together, these contributions reinforce Black Thrive's role as a trusted partner in advancing race equity within mental health inpatient care and supporting sustainable systems change.

Digital Communications and Audience Development Audit

The reporting period marked a strategic turning point for Black Thrive Global's Communications function, driven by increased capacity and a stronger focus on multi-platform engagement. The appointment of a Senior Communications Manager and Communications Officer strengthened our ability to deliver campaigns, support locality teams, and communicate research and community-led narratives.

With the expanded team, we focused on rebuilding our strategy—clarifying organisational impact, strengthening our identity across national and local work, and embedding community voice across communications. Digital engagement grew across platforms, reaching system leaders, researchers, practitioners, cultural institutions, and national stakeholders. Visual storytelling, research outputs, and locality updates generated the highest engagement, supporting our focus on narrative change, institutional accountability, and sustained digital growth.

Strengthening Narrative Infrastructure and Content Production

Alongside campaign delivery, the Communications function significantly increased the volume, consistency, and strategic use of owned content. The team established a regular publishing rhythm that strengthened ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

This shift enabled more consistent sharing of organisational updates, research insights, campaign activity, and locality-led work, and marked a move from sporadic communications to a more intentional and sustained engagement model.

14 BLOGS PUBLISHED

Increase of approximately 1,300% in blog output

10 NEWSLETTERS PUBLISHED

400% increase in newsletter production compared with the previous year.

Regular sharing of organisational updates

Increased visibility of research insights

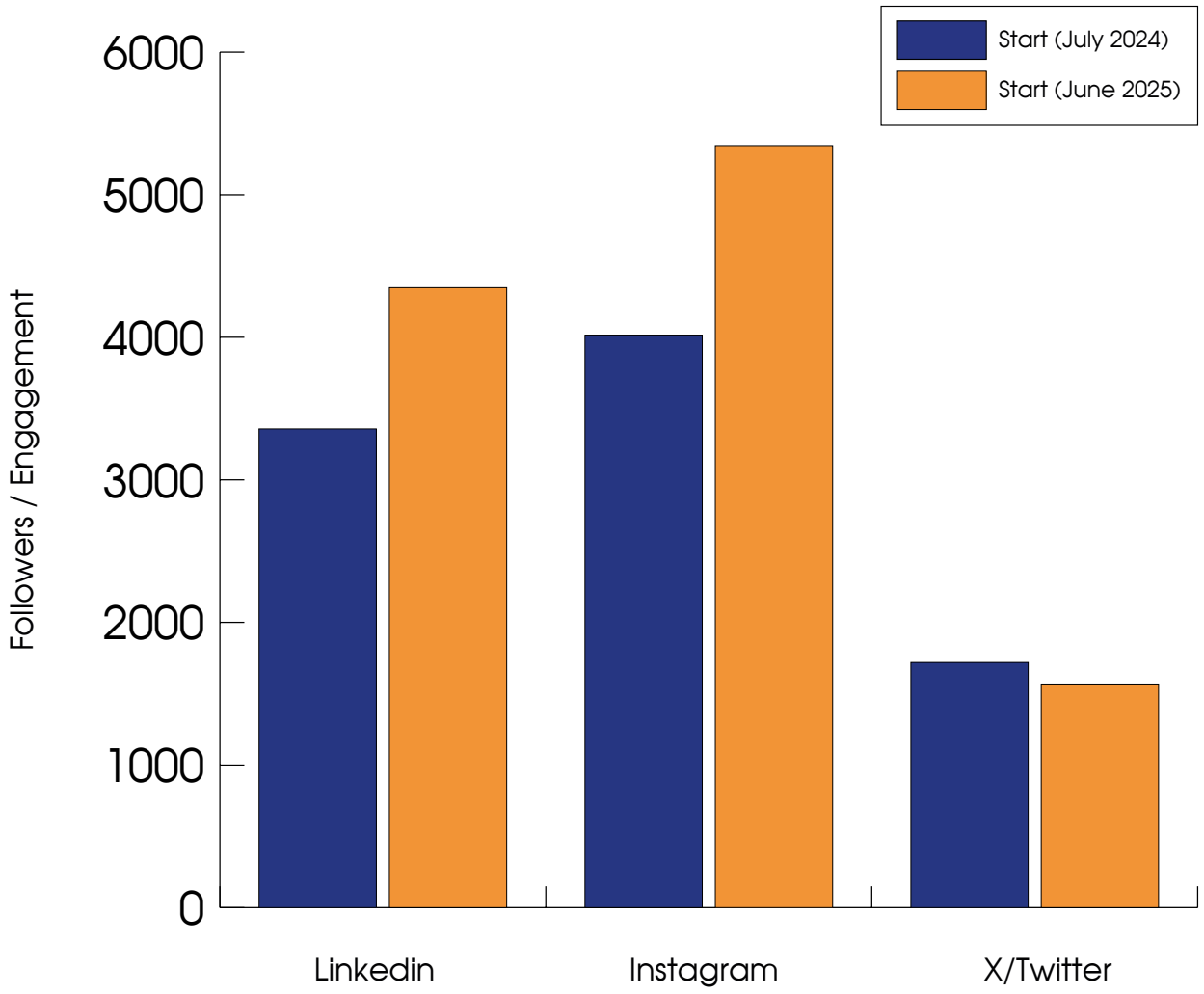
Stronger amplification of campaign activity

Elevated locality-led narratives

This growth marked a decisive move from sporadic communications to a more intentional, structured, and sustained engagement model.

Sustaining Digital Growth and Engagement

Our core digital platforms continued to act as vital bridges between Black Thrive and a diverse range of stakeholders, including community members, statutory partners, and VCSE organisations. Key achievements included improved brand consistency and the introduction of more structured content planning.



+29.5% **Growth**

+33.1% **Growth**

–8.8% **Growth**

Operational and Strategic Development

The reporting period marked a strategic turning point for Black Thrive Global's Communications function, shaped by increased capacity and a renewed focus on multi-platform engagement.

The appointment of a Senior Communications Manager and a Communications Officer strengthened the team's ability to deliver complex campaigns, provide targeted support to locality teams, and consistently communicate research insights and community-led narratives. With a strengthened team in place, the Communications function entered a period of strategic rebuilding.

We improved our ability to articulate organisational impact, present a clear and coherent organisational identity across national and local work, and embed community voice more consistently across our communications activity.

Digital engagement continued to grow across platforms, extending our reach beyond traditional community audiences to include system leaders, researchers, practitioners, cultural institutions, and national stakeholders. Visual storytelling, research outputs, and updates from locality teams generated the highest levels of engagement. Our communications strategy focused on strengthening narrative infrastructure, driving institutional accountability, and sustaining digital growth, with community voice embedded across this work.

Operations, Human resources and Finance

Photo: Microsoft 365

The Operations team plays a central role in enabling Black Thrive Global to deliver its mission by providing a strong, reliable organisational infrastructure. This includes HR and recruitment support, office management, payroll services, statutory governance, and ensuring compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

These services are delivered in partnership with specialist providers in employment law, HR policies and procedures, GDPR and data protection, IT security, and health and safety regulation and training. Support is provided across the whole organisation, including permanent staff, part-time staff, and colleagues on short-term contracts.

During the 2024–2025 reporting period, the Operations team continued to strengthen internal systems, processes, and compliance frameworks to support organisational growth and high-quality programme delivery. Building on systems development work initiated in 2024, the focus this year was on establishing a robust operational foundation to enable Black Thrive Global to scale sustainably.

Key achievements during the financial year included:

- Enhancing the use of Bright HR systems, including bringing the payroll function in-house to improve efficiency, accuracy, and oversight.
- Undertaking a review of the organisation's pay and reward principles, including job evaluation and salary benchmarking.
- Reviewing and updating HR policies, including the introduction of a new sexual harassment policy and the delivery of related staff training.
- Developing a comprehensive staff training and development strategy, further strengthening the value of the organisation's internal Learning Week.

These improvements have strengthened organisational governance, supported staff wellbeing, and ensured that Black Thrive Global continues to meet its legal, regulatory, and safeguarding responsibilities while maintaining a supportive, professional, and inclusive working environment

Finance and Funding

The financial results demonstrate that Black Thrive Global's income has remained relatively stable at approximately £2.2 million over the past three years. This consistency reflects the sustained effort invested in securing diverse and balanced funding streams and represents a positive outcome in an increasingly challenging funding environment.

During the year ended June 2025, total income decreased by 5%. This reduction was primarily due to several large, restricted grants coming to an end, while newly secured grants commenced after the close of the financial year. As a result, restricted income decreased from £1.7 million in 2024 to £1.3 million in 2025, while unrestricted income increased from £578,000 to £772,000. In the last financial year, 64% of the organisation's income was derived from restricted grants (2024: 74%), with 36% generated from unrestricted income (2024: 26%).

The increase in unrestricted income is a positive development and reflects the organisation's strategic ambition to diversify its income streams. This includes growing fee-based income through contract work and projects that draw on the Research Team's expertise.

The organisation's continued success in generating unrestricted income has enabled unrestricted reserves to grow to £556,000 at the end of the financial year (2024: £438,000), which is above the level required under the reserves policy.

As a going concern, Black Thrive Global continues to have access to core funding from Impact on Urban Health to support operational activity. This funding is drawn down strategically and only as required, ensuring prudent financial management.

Financial Management

During the reporting period, the organisation focused on further developing its financial management function to support longer-term strategic planning. This work aimed to provide a robust framework to assist management and the Board in the efficient allocation of resources, cash flow management, budgeting, and the improvement of operational efficiency.

The organisation has continued to implement sound and robust financial management practices and internal controls, ensuring that accounting records meet all relevant regulatory and compliance requirements.

The overarching goal remains to maintain a financially sustainable organisation that can continue to generate the income required to deliver its long-term objectives and community impact.

Financial Summary

Category	Jun-21 (£)	Jun-22 (£)	Jun-23 (£)	Jun-24 (£)
Income				
Restricted Income	89,983	1,147,086	1,623,697	1,662,409
Unrestricted Income	120,776	315,715	629,398	577,640
Total Income	210,759	1,462,801	2,253,095	2,240,049
Expenditure				
Staff salaries	55,656	571,349	931,417	1,038,520
Programme direct costs	107,386	629,801	851,152	759,985
Support costs	39,226	170,667	285,133	160,261
Total Expenditure	202,268	1,371,817	2,067,702	1,958,766
Surplus	8,491	90,984	185,393	281,283
Funds at the start of the year	0	6,878	80,575	228,209
Funds at the end of the year	6,878	80,575	228,209	439,171

Black Thrive Lambeth

Black Thrive Lambeth plays a central role in advancing Black-led systems change to improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for Black communities across the borough. Grounded in lived experience, community leadership, and accountability, the partnership brings together residents, voluntary and community organisations, and statutory partners to challenge the structural inequalities that shape access to care and influence everyday wellbeing.

Over the year, Black Thrive Lambeth strengthened its community engagement, deepened its influence within local systems, and expanded opportunities for Black residents to shape services and decision-making. Through initiatives such as Community Assemblies, lived experience leadership, and strategic partnerships, the programme ensured that Black voices remained central to conversations on mental health, housing, employment, and the wider determinants of wellbeing.

At the heart of Black Thrive Lambeth's approach is the creation of inclusive, culturally rooted spaces where Black communities can connect, organise, and lead change. By centring community expertise and lived experience, the partnership has continued to influence local policy, practice, and commissioning priorities, while holding systems accountable for delivering equitable and culturally responsive services.

Looking ahead, Black Thrive Lambeth remains committed to strengthening community power, supporting Black leadership, and driving sustained systems change that improves outcomes for current and future generations across the borough.

A letter from the Head of Programme Delivery

"Since our last Impact Report, Black Thrive Lambeth has continued to build on its foundations by strengthening networks, relationships, and partnerships across the borough and beyond. In a changing and increasingly challenging funding landscape, the partnership has focused on developing purposeful, values-led collaborations that extend reach while deepening local impact.

A key milestone during this period was the launch of a partnership with the Southbank Centre, through which Black Thrive Lambeth supported the establishment of a Youth Advisory Programme to co-create and shape the Centre's Arts and Wellbeing Programme. This initiative actively involves young people aged 11–25 from Lambeth and Southwark through dedicated Youth Advisory Groups, creating new pathways for young people to influence cultural provision while addressing mental health inequalities and systemic racism across South East London. The programme reflects a shared commitment to inclusive, creative spaces where young people can meaningfully engage, lead, and thrive. Alongside this external work, Black Thrive Lambeth strengthened its internal capacity to better serve Black communities. Organisational processes were formalised, infrastructure was enhanced, and leadership capacity was reinforced, ensuring the partnership is well positioned to deliver complex, multi-strand systems change work.

These developments have supported greater consistency across workstreams and enabled continued programme redesign and strategic alignment. Looking ahead, Black Thrive Lambeth remains committed to strengthening its research intelligence, ensuring that data, lived experience, and community insight are used more effectively to drive systems change. The partnership is also working to align more closely with statutory and system partners to influence meaningful process change and promote shared learning. Peer learning continues to be a central pillar of this work, with a strong focus on collaboration, reflection, and collective problem-solving.

As the partnership continues to evolve, Black Thrive Lambeth remains focused on supporting others through practical guidance on effective, anti-racist engagement approaches. We are grateful for the continued trust and support of our partners and communities as we work together to embed this work more deeply and sustainably across Lambeth.

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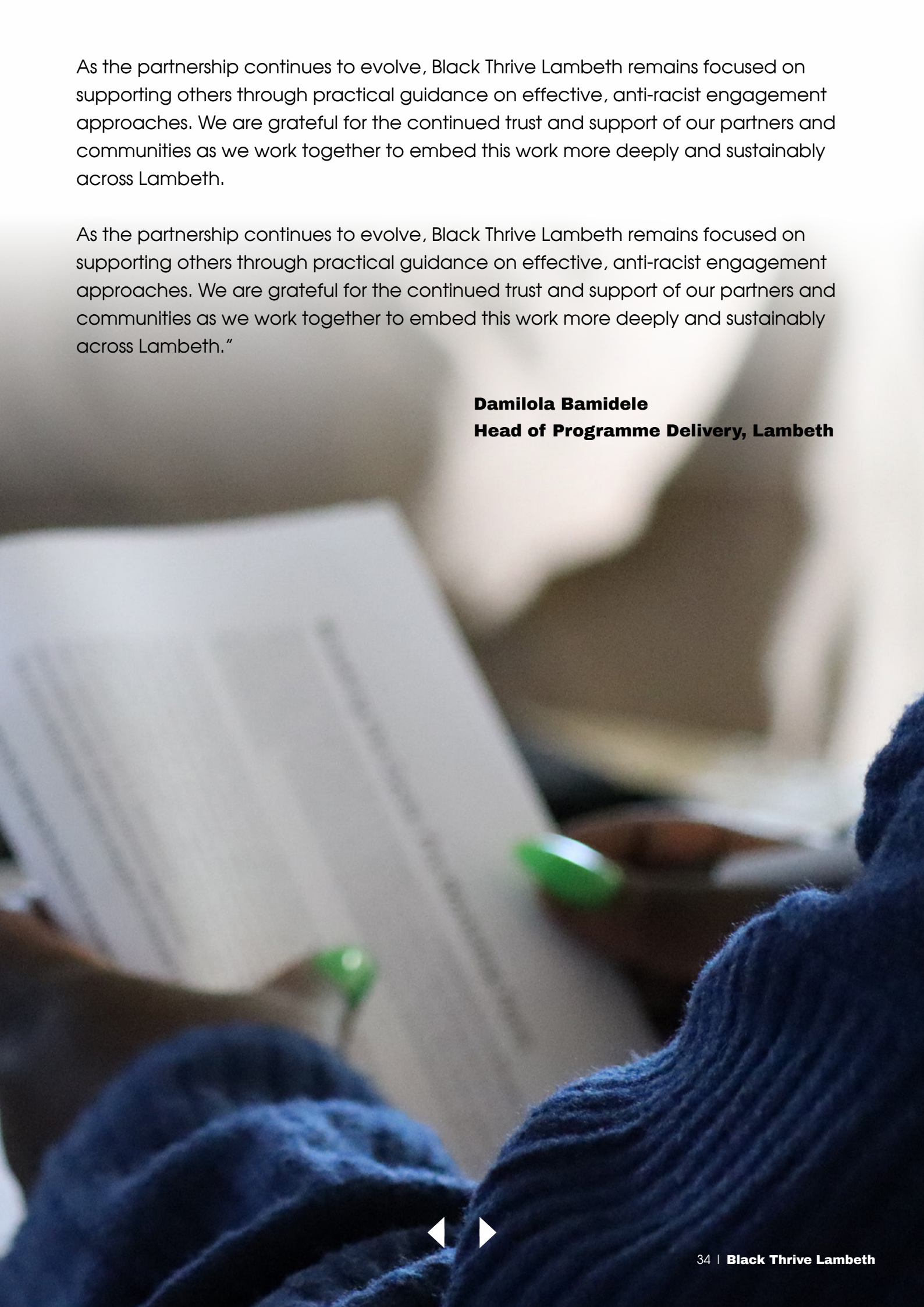
Damilola Bamidele
Head of Programme Delivery, Lambeth



Black Queer and Thriving

Black Queer & Thriving (BQT) is an exploratory pilot programme that centres the voices, lived expertise, and leadership of Black LGBTQ+ communities across Lambeth, Southwark, and Haringey.

Grounded in community knowledge, co-production, and participatory practice, the programme recognises Black LGBTQ+ people as knowledge holders and supports them to engage as system actors with the expertise required to influence health and wellbeing systems and articulate their own visions of liberation.

Through this approach, BQT seeks to drive community-informed and community-led change that improves access, experiences, and outcomes for Black LGBTQ+ people within health and wellbeing systems.

Over the past year, this has included creating and holding spaces for Black LGBTQ+ communities to connect, organise, and engage; supporting the development of Working Groups as Experts by Experience; developing participatory research; exploring creative health and social prescribing pathways; and increasing capacity-building support for Working Groups.

This work is funded by Impact on Urban Health, Lambeth Council, and the National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities).

Programme Development

Over the past year, BQT has progressed from an exploratory pilot into a fully developed, multi-locality programme. Increased team capacity, including the appointment of a Project Officer, enabled more consistent delivery, deeper community engagement, and improved coordination across boroughs.

Expansion

BQT Working Groups are central to the programme's delivery. They bring together Black LGBTQ+ residents, including activists, practitioners, and community members, to identify local priorities, shape programme activity, advise on community research, hold statutory partners to account, and co-produce creative health and wellbeing initiatives.

During the year, BQT formally expanded its work across three localities: Lambeth, Southwark, and Haringey, with further expansion opportunities currently being explored. Partnerships with voluntary, community, and statutory organisations have continued to develop organically, increasing the number of Black LGBTQ+ people influencing change through board membership and widening the age groups engaged.

BQT's focus on participatory research, community-led co-production, and social action has demonstrated the importance of centring community knowledge, particularly for communities that remain underrepresented in health and wellbeing research and policy.

Over the past year, BQT focused on expanding, developing, and sustaining its Working Groups across all localities.

Priorities for the Year Ahead

Disseminating the final BQT Community Research Report

Supporting action on community-led recommendations

Expanding research capacity across the programme

Relaunching the BQT Creative Health Event Space

Developing collaborative work, including the new partnership with Just Like Us

BQT Lambeth

Over the past 12 months, the Lambeth Working Group continued to share expertise and provide critical insight to shape the longest-running Working Group within the programme. Members maintained a visible presence across Black and LGBTQ+ community spaces, representing Black Thrive at events including Black Psychotherapy Diaspora Pride, Lambeth Council Pride Reception, Southwark Pride, and UK Black Pride.

The group reviewed its 2022–24 Community Engagement Series, which focused on creative health interventions and social prescribing pathways. Building on this learning, members are developing a new event series centred on Black-led, community-prescribed wellbeing practices to tackle social isolation, strengthen connection, and promote culturally grounded approaches to care and healing.

Members also shared learning on co-production through a Black queer lens and supported the introduction of the Waters of Systems Change model to Haringey residents.

BQT Haringey

In response to feedback highlighting a lack of Black LGBTQ+ events in North London, BQT partnered with Black Thrive Haringey and The Rainbow Room at London Metropolitan University to deliver the Black, Bold and Brilliant community event. The event created an affirming space for over 35 Black LGBTQ+ residents to connect, share experiences, and shape priorities for local action through creative and cultural activities.

Subsequent Working Group meetings reflected on draft community report recommendations, local health and wellbeing pathways, and proposed Working Group structures. In a relatively short period, participants were supported to pursue their own wellbeing initiatives, cultural projects, and peer-led activities addressing gaps in local provision. Together, these efforts established a strong foundation for cross-borough collaboration and for elevating Black LGBTQ+ leadership.

BQT Southwark

During the year, BQT partnered with The Chakula Project at The Africa Centre to establish a Working Group structure in Southwark. This collaboration combines Chakula's established community networks with BQT's systems-change approach to support Black LGBTQ+ residents in addressing barriers to wellbeing.

Through joint planning sessions and meetings, the partnership began identifying practical areas of focus, including mapping gaps in support, developing wellbeing initiatives, and strengthening representation of Black LGBTQ+ residents within wider community structures across the borough. Across all localities, Working Groups strengthened community connection and accountability, ensuring the programme remained rooted in lived experience and community leadership.

Community Research and Storytelling

Throughout the year, BQT further developed its participatory research approach, which centres community wisdom as valid evidence to inform programme design, partnership development, creative health outputs, and proposed social prescribing pathways.

Insights gathered through the BQT Community Research Report and Working Groups shaped decision-making and ensured interventions were grounded in lived expertise.

In January 2025, BQT launched the draft findings of the Community Research Report, exploring the health and wellbeing experiences of Black LGBTQ+ people in Lambeth and Southwark. The event brought together nearly 90 stakeholders from the voluntary, statutory, and private sectors, alongside community leaders.

The report focuses on mental health, social isolation and loneliness, social prescribing, and safety, and represents the largest community-led dataset on Black LGBTQ+ people in Lambeth and Southwark. It will serve as a foundational resource guiding the future direction of the programme.

Living Out Loud

- Black, Queer & Disabled – a four-part blog series released for Disability History Month, sharing lived experiences of Black LGBTQ+ community members
- Queerness Is African – a multimedia project developed with Black Queers Connect and The Chakula Project, exploring African and diasporic perspectives on queer identity

Partnerships

Queer Networks Connect (QNC)

Developed by Black Thrive Lambeth in partnership with Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation, Queer Networks Connect creates space for organisations and practitioners to collaborate on improving LGBTQ+ health and wellbeing.

The second iteration, QNC II, explored the intersection of Blackness, disability, and queerness. Delivered in collaboration with Parapride, the event engaged over 55 participants from 12 organisations and staff networks, providing opportunities to connect with wellbeing practitioners who may be accessed through social prescribing pathways.

IVOR Resource Network

BQT provided capacity support to BLKOUT UK in the development of IVOR (Informed Voice of Resources), an AI-powered pilot platform connecting Black LGBTQ+ individuals and organisations with tailored opportunities, guidance, and wellbeing support.
Initial testing with Black LGBTQ+ organisations informed platform refinement ahead of its official launch in August 2025.

Systems Change and Influence

- Through partnership working and a strong grounding in lived expertise, BQT contributed to systems change across multiple levels, including:
- Collaboration with Southwark Council on the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Raising over £100,000, in partnership with Just Like Us, to support Black LGBTQ+ young people to access the Ambassador Programme
- Supporting Southwark Pensioners Centre with diversity and inclusion processes
- Representation on strategic boards, including the GLA LGBTQI+ Forum and Lambeth Together LGBTQI+ EDI Sub-Group
- Delivery of a workshop on meaningful co-production with Black LGBTQ+ communities at NHS ConfedExpo
- Supporting Working Group responses to consultations, including the EHRC single-sex spaces consultation and the Mental Health Act Bill

Community Engagement

Over the year, BQT engaged with over 150 organisations, local activists, and more than 250 Black LGBTQ+ people. Engagement activity aimed to strengthen connections, increase visibility, and create safe spaces for shared learning and collective action.

Initiatives delivered during the year included Black, Bold and Brilliant, PrEPared for the Future, the Living Out Loud blog series, and ongoing outreach and consultation. These activities increased participation, strengthened networks, and supported the co-creation of programme activity with communities.

Reflections and Learning

Initiatives delivered during the year included Black, Bold and Brilliant, PrEPared for the Future, the Living Out Loud blog series, and ongoing outreach and consultation. These activities increased participation, strengthened networks, and supported the co-creation of programme activity with communities.

Looking Ahead 2025 – 2026

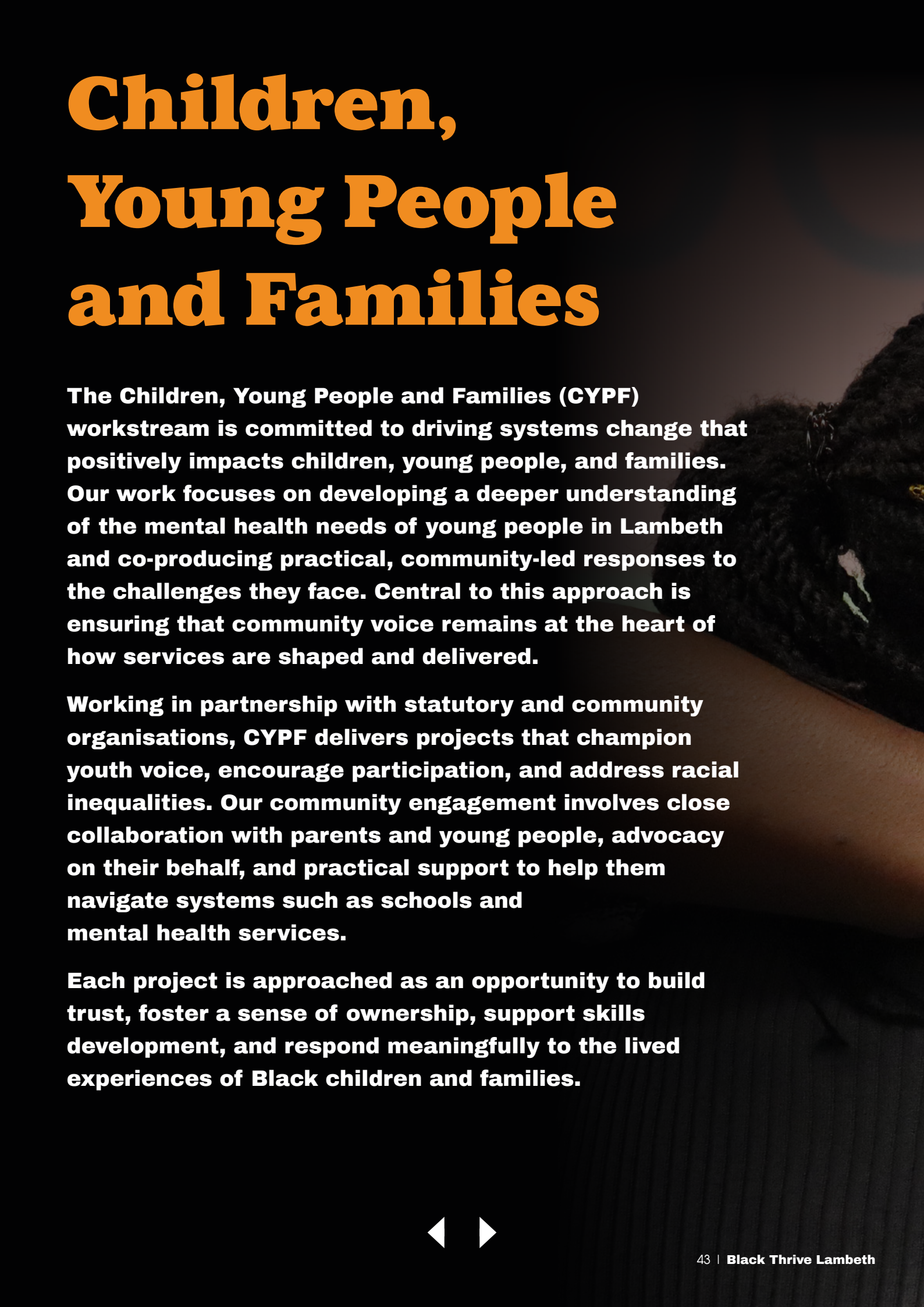
Building on the year's achievements, BQT's priorities for 2025–26 include the official launch of the IVOR platform and monitoring its impact; continued development of Working Groups across all localities; and expansion of the partnership with Just Like Us to support Black queer young people.

Emerging opportunities include increased engagement from local organisations and stakeholders, creating potential to scale community interventions, strengthen knowledge-sharing, and deepen policy influence.

Learning from the Community Research Report, Living Out Loud, and ongoing engagement will continue to inform programme development, ensuring BQT remains intersectional, inclusive, and culturally responsive in its approach to Black LGBTQ+ health and wellbeing.

Black
CHRIS FRENCH
CHEY (SHE/THEY)
LAMBETH CLINKS

Children, Young People and Families



The Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) workstream is committed to driving systems change that positively impacts children, young people, and families. Our work focuses on developing a deeper understanding of the mental health needs of young people in Lambeth and co-producing practical, community-led responses to the challenges they face. Central to this approach is ensuring that community voice remains at the heart of how services are shaped and delivered.

Working in partnership with statutory and community organisations, CYPF delivers projects that champion youth voice, encourage participation, and address racial inequalities. Our community engagement involves close collaboration with parents and young people, advocacy on their behalf, and practical support to help them navigate systems such as schools and mental health services.

Each project is approached as an opportunity to build trust, foster a sense of ownership, support skills development, and respond meaningfully to the lived experiences of Black children and families.

Children, Young People and Families

Over the past year, the workstream continued to support the Fund the Hubs campaign and successfully concluded the Children in Need – Young Researchers Programme, celebrating its completion through the Thrive & Wellbeing Programme.

We are proud of the Young Researchers and their commitment throughout the process. In partnership with the South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB), the School Engagement Programme was redesigned and relaunched and is now in delivery.

Alongside this, our collaboration with the Southbank Centre supported the launch of a new Youth Collective.

Looking ahead, CYPF will continue to build on this work by developing existing programmes and partnerships. Short-term priorities include:

- Promoting the Roots to Wings Toolkit, a whole-school community resource supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Sharing the final Children in Need study findings and methodological reflections
- Continuing to support the Fund the Hubs campaign for early support hubs for young people
- Building research capacity among young people and creating opportunities for learning and development

Children in Need – Young Researchers Project

During the reporting year, the Children in Need – Young Researchers Project came to an end. The project focused on exploring the factors affecting the wellbeing of Black and mixed-heritage children living, studying, or spending time in Lambeth.

In collaboration with the Black Thrive Research Institute and Observatory, a series of training workshops were designed to develop research skills among the Young Researchers. These workshops covered study design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, enabling participants to actively shape and understand the research process.

The study used the Tree of Life approach, a strengths-based methodology rooted in narrative therapy, to explore key themes including identity, poverty, bullying, and feelings of safety. Findings highlighted poverty, homelessness, and racialised bullying in schools as the most significant factors affecting children's wellbeing. Alongside these challenges, the research also identified resilience, self-awareness, and bravery as important protective factors, particularly in contexts where institutional support is limited.

Drawing on these findings, the Young Researchers worked alongside Black Thrive to co-produce a wellbeing programme responding directly to their lived experiences and the study outcomes. A total fund of £40,000 supported the development of this programme.

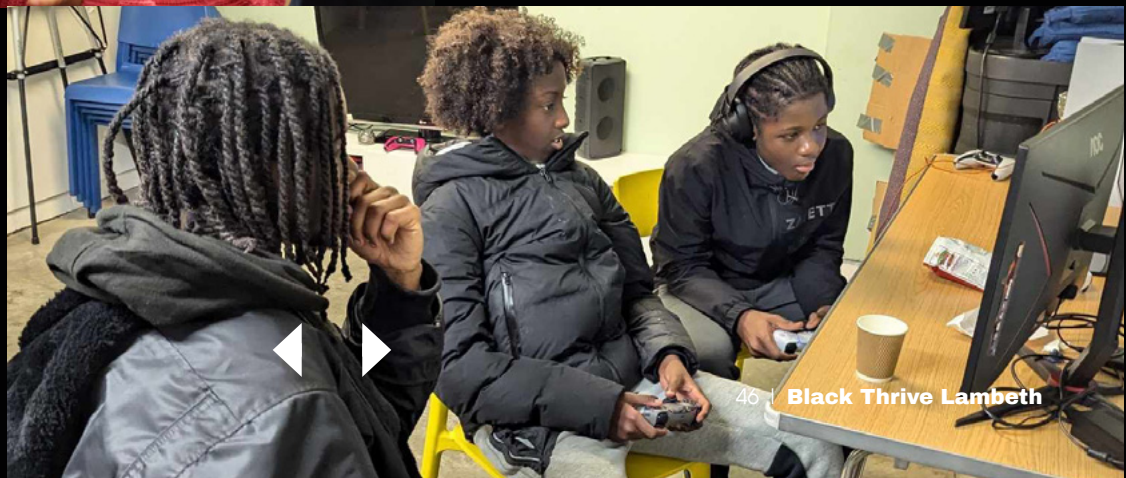
The group curated a series of creative and wellbeing-focused workshops that brought together their interests, passions, and approaches to mental health. These included:

The Actor's Toolkit, delivered in collaboration with Tom Moutchi and Demz

Rhythm & Rhymes, delivered in collaboration with Poetic Unity

The Glow Up, delivered in collaboration with BlackGirlFest

Level Up, delivered in collaboration with ESports Youth Club



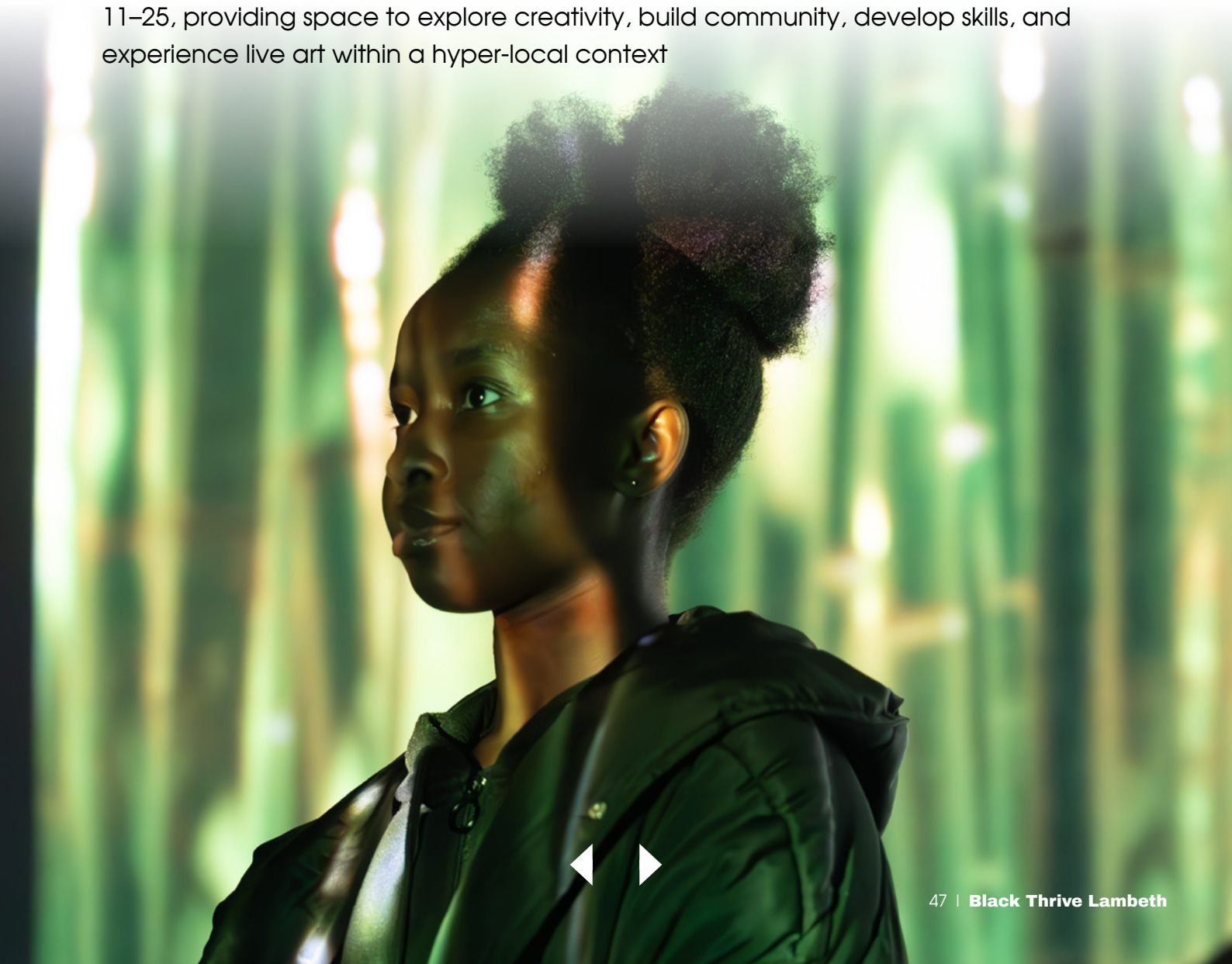
Youth Collective

Delivered in partnership with the Southbank Centre Black Thrive believes that embedding youth voice in programme design is essential to achieving positive outcomes for young people. This principle is captured in our approach: nothing for young people, without young people.

In line with this commitment, Black Thrive partnered with the Southbank Centre to support the establishment of a new Youth Collective, designed to shape the future of arts and wellbeing at the organisation. As the Southbank Centre approaches its 75th anniversary, the Youth Collective provides an opportunity to refocus creative

engagement activity and place young people at the heart of this milestone. The Youth Collective centres the experiences, voices, and aspirations of young people, with a particular focus on those living in Lambeth and Southwark. The initiative forms part of a longer-term commitment to developing an Arts and Wellbeing programme that supports young people's mental health while strengthening access to creative opportunities

The programme offers a range of free creative activities for young people aged 11–25, providing space to explore creativity, build community, develop skills, and experience live art within a hyper-local context



School Engagement Programme

Delivered in partnership with the South East London Integrated Care Board

The South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) commissioned Black Thrive to deliver listening exercises with children, parents, and school staff across Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Bexley, Bromley, and Greenwich. The aim was to better understand the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of Black and mixed Black heritage children within primary school settings.

Insights gathered through this work were shared with SEL ICB and place-based commissioners to inform local commissioning decisions and ensure services are better aligned with community needs. The programme emerged from the NHS Core20Plus5 initiative, which seeks to address health inequalities through the Community Connector Model.

Building on learning from the first year, the programme was redesigned and relaunched in 2025, retaining its core principles while strengthening delivery. As part of a shared commitment to building capacity within the VCSE sector, Black Thrive and SEL ICB identified an opportunity to work with by-and-for organisations to support delivery of the second pilotphase.

In January 2025, working with SEL ICB and borough commissioners, six delivery partners were appointed based on their experience in youth and education work and their track record of supporting Black communities:

With ongoing support from Black Thrive, delivery partners are now working within schools in their respective boroughs to deliver the programme.

Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy (LA) is a series of workshops designed to support capacity building among delivery partners involved in the School Engagement Programme. The programme is delivered by experienced facilitators and aims to ensure that partners are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and relationships required to deliver high-quality, equitable interventions.

The Leadership Academy ensures that:

- All partners have access to essential learning and programme information
- Partners can engage in an interactive learning space that supports reflection, collaboration, and relationship-building

Workshops delivered during the year included:

- Leadership Academy One: Programme Induction and Kick-off. Facilitated by Black Thrive and Jrny, this session introduced the programme's history, rationale, and ways of working, and initiated reflective learning processes.
- Leadership Academy Two: Trauma-Informed and Anti-Racist Practice Education. Facilitated by Curtis Worrell (Class13), this workshop explored deficit ideology in education and intervention spaces, examining how it can cause harm and how practitioners can challenge it.
- Leadership Academy Three: School Engagement and Appreciative Inquiry. Facilitated by Teia Rogers (Jrny Consulting), this session focused on Appreciative Inquiry methodology and provided partners with opportunities to practise facilitation skills.
- Leadership Academy Four: Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation. Delivered by Black Thrive, this workshop provided guidance on focus group processes, data collection, and reporting expectations.

Photo: Children Nature Network

Fund The Hubs Campaign

During the year, Black Thrive continued to support the Fund the Hubs campaign alongside Centre for Mental Health, Mind, The Children's Society, BACP, YoungMinds, Youth Access, and the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition.

The campaign calls for a national network of early support hubs in every local area, enabling young people to access timely advice and support for mental health concerns.

Following the July budget update, funding allocated to the hubs fell significantly below previous commitments. In response, coalition partners continued to engage with Members of Parliament to advocate for a model that prioritises mental health support rather than crime reduction.

Responsibility for implementing the Young Futures Hubs has since been transferred to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), with continued involvement from the Department for Education. As planning for the new model progresses, the coalition remains actively engaged to ensure that minimum standards, best practice, and community voice are embedded in the design and delivery of the hubs.

Communities Workstream

Black Thrive Lambeth (BTL) continued to place Black communities at the heart of systems change, mental health, and cultural storytelling across the borough.

Through community-led processes, creative engagement, and strategic collaborations, the team advanced its mission to promote race equity, healing, and community power.

A key area of focus during the year was the continued development of the Black Man Mental Health Toolkit, which remains in co-production with community members. The toolkit reflects a long-term commitment to culturally responsive mental health support rather than a completed product, ensuring that community voice continues to shape its direction.

len of Lambeth & Southwark
OUR VOICE
MATTERS
Mental health support should reflect what we actually
need. That's why we're creating a new programme —
and we want to hear from you.
to share
will help
community.

Community Assembly 2024: Deepening Dialogue

The Community Assembly remains a core mechanism for co-production, bringing together residents, service providers, and stakeholders to explore systemic challenges and shape collective solutions.

What was achieved:

In November 2024, BTL convened over 50 participants from more than 10 organisations across Lambeth. Using structured formats such as feedback stations and guided discussions, the Assembly captured community insights that could inform local policy and service delivery. Participants spoke openly about institutional racial bias, cultural misunderstanding, and the disconnect between service users and decision-makers.

Impact and reflections:

The Assembly reinforced BTL's role as a trusted convenor of cross-sector dialogue grounded in lived experience. Participants reported feeling seen and respected, strengthening trust in BTL as a partner. Logistical challenges, including venue costs and scheduling conflicts, highlighted the need for improved coordination and promotion to maximise attendance. Looking ahead, BTL aims to strengthen follow-up processes so that community feedback translates visibly into action, helping to avoid consultation fatigue.

Community Assembly 2024: Deepening Dialogue

Project Heal remains a complex, multi-site storytelling initiative exploring Black resilience, trauma, and healing. Lambeth contributed to the co-creation of docufilms such as Sisters Three, Young Abdi, Sean Rigg, and Mikey Powell.

Progress so far

- Lambeth voices were centred in the wider Project Heal narrative.
- The films generated dialogue on historical and contemporary injustice, amplifying voices often excluded from mainstream discourse.

Challenges

- Coordinating across boroughs required careful management of timelines and expectations.
- Safeguarding and ethical responsibilities demanded high levels of care and sensitivity.

Learning

- Clear governance and communication are essential for effective collaboration.
- Trauma-informed projects must include time for reflection and emotional support.
- Storytelling must link to structural change to avoid becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

Project Heal remains an ongoing journey, requiring sustained investment, adaptive governance, and shared accountability across localities.

Black Man Mental Health Toolkit – Co-Design in Progress

The Black Man Mental Health Toolkit continues to evolve through community co-design.

Progress so far

- Over 40 Black men have contributed through focus groups, interviews, and feedback sessions.
- The toolkit frames wellbeing in culturally relevant language rather than generic models.
- Public events, including the Lambeth Country Show, were used to test content and gather feedback.

Challenges

- Co-development is time intensive.
- Ensuring representation across age, background, and lived experience requires ongoing outreach.
- Translating community voice into a resource adopted by institutions presents further challenges.

Looking Ahead

- Clear governance and communication are essential for effective collaboration.
- Trauma-informed projects must include time for reflection and emotional support.
- Storytelling must link to structural change to avoid becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

The toolkit's iterative model allows it to remain responsive to feedback. As it moves toward public launch, BTL plans to engage statutory and community partners to support its adoption in practice.

Easter Egg Engagements: Building Trust Through Joy

BTL introduced light-touch community engagement through Easter egg giveaways, which proved to be a powerful trust-building tool.

Angell Town:
An Easter Egg Hunt brought families together in celebration, creating joyful moments in a community often framed through deficit narratives.

Central Hill:
Egg distributions extended engagement to new families and networks, creating informal opportunities for connection.

Partnership with We Are Symphony:

The initiative sparked a new relationship with We Are Symphony, opening possibilities for future collaboration around place-based regeneration and creative engagement. **Key lessons:**

- Joyful engagement humanises systems change work.
- Informal interactions build trust.
- New partnerships can emerge through simple community presence.

Embedding Reflective Practice and Partnership Culture

Beyond individual projects, BTL strengthened its internal culture and network learning.

Learning Memory System:
Reflection was embedded into everyday practice, supporting adaptability and continuous learning.
Place Matters Framework:
The World Café model was used during the 2024 Community Assembly, making conversations more inclusive and dynamic.
Network Leadership:
Lambeth's experiences increasingly shaped Thriving Futures-wide conversations about governance, power, and co-production.

Building Bridges Through Theatre

BTL developed a growing relationship with the National Theatre, enabling Lambeth residents — from elders to young people — to access world-class cultural experiences. Group visits created opportunities for connection, inspiration, and representation, reinforcing the importance of inclusive access to the arts.

Conclusion and Forward Look

In 2024–2025, Black Thrive Lambeth made significant strides in strengthening community-led systems change. While some initiatives remain in progress, they represent intentional, community-rooted approaches rather than short-term interventions.

Moving forward, BTL's focus will be on translating engagement and learning into durable institutional change through deeper statutory partnerships, sustained resourcing, and continued co-production with Black communities.

Over the year, Black Thrive Lambeth:

- Delivered participatory Community Assemblies.
- Advanced Project Heal as an ongoing storytelling initiative.
- Progressed the Black Man Mental Health Toolkit through co-design.
- Engaged young people through the Future You Project.
- Strengthened reflective practice and network leadership.

Key Themes:

- Process over perfection
- The importance of partnership
- Trust through consistent presence
- Cultural storytelling as a systems change tool
- Learning and adaptability

BLACKTHRIVE.ORG
"We are on a mission to create a society in which Black people have joyous and fulfilling lives."
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and to sign up for our
Or visit

Culturally Appropriate Peer Support and Advocacy

Culturally Appropriate Peer Support and Advocacy (CAPSA) is funded by the Living Well Network Alliance including South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM), the Department of Health and Social Care, and Lambeth Together.

Building on the programme's strong foundations, CAPSA has entered its second phase, with a renewed focus on strengthening statutory partnerships, embedding learning from evaluation, and delivering more consistent and measurable outcomes.

This next phase reflects a maturing model shaped by lived experience, clinical insight, and the recommendation arising from this year's evaluation. The programme continues to centre culturally grounded peer support and advocacy, ensuring that Black service users experience care that is affirming, responsive, and rooted in trust

CAPSA
Culturally Appropriate Peer Support Advocacy
they are from a similar background
and would sit and chat rather than
only give medication."

CAPSA Evaluation

The CAPSA evaluation has now been completed and shared with key internal and external stakeholders. The findings provided valuable insight into both the strengths of the service and areas for development. A comprehensive set of recommendations has been agreed, guiding the programme's next stage of delivery.

The first recommendation arising from the report was to gain a better understanding of the work undertaken within CAPSA. This is because previous feedback indicated that, although the service is excellent, it is challenging to articulate the work being done clearly. We have since ensured that this is better understood.

Developing the CAPSA Framework

CAPSA has begun the early stages of developing a formal CAPSA Framework. This emerging clinical model will be culturally grounded, clinically informed, and community centred, providing a clear and affirming structure for both current staff and new team members.

Drawing on recognised therapeutic approaches, Afrocentric theories, and culturally aligned practice, the framework will clarify how CAPSA's work is delivered while supporting consistency, quality, and professional development across the service.

Engagement with Service Users: Adapting Practice

In response to evaluation learning, CAPSA has adapted its engagement approach to remain flexible, responsive, and trauma-informed. This includes extending collaboration with early intervention teams in Lambeth and strengthening signposting for individuals who cannot be supported directly by the service.

CAPSA's work recognises that fluctuating motivation, readiness for change, and systemic barriers such as anxiety and stigma are common experiences for service users. By drawing on lived experience, practitioners can explore ambivalence without judgement, creating safe and supportive environments for engagement.

The team works closely with Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs), raising concerns, exploring alternative support strategies, and offering flexible engagement options such as shorter sessions and remote check-ins. This approach supports continuity of care while respecting individual needs and circumstances.

Alongside this, administrative processes have been reviewed and strengthened to improve data capture, reporting, and learning. Training and facilitation materials are also being updated to support both internal development and external knowledge sharing.

Maintenance of professional relationships

Despite periods of reduced capacity, CAPSA has prioritised maintaining strong relationships across inpatient wards and community mental health teams.
The service continues to accept referrals, contribute to formulation meetings, and provide insight on complex cases where lived experience perspectives add value.

Plans are in place to rebuild visibility and outreach as capacity stabilises, ensuring CAPSA's presence across services remains consistent, trusted, and impactful.

Supporting PCREF Implementation

CAPSA has played an important role in supporting the implementation of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF). This has included empowering service users and carers to understand and use PCREF mechanisms and supporting them to assert their rights within statutory systems.

The team has worked closely with the Lambeth Independent Advisory Group (IAG), embedding shared learning into practice, and has strengthened collaboration with trusted partners within SLaM to support race equity and accountability.

Strengthening Processes and Practice

At the core of CAPSA's work is a dedication to continuously enhancing how we support and connect with our service users. Although our procedures and processes have been in place since the service started, much of this operational knowledge has developed naturally and remained undocumented.

Over the past year, we have taken time to pause, reflect, and clearly map out how we work — identifying what's effective, where there are gaps, and how we can improve. This process has resulted in the creation of a comprehensive suite of documentation, templates, and practice guidance that now supports our daily operations.

These new tools not only bring greater clarity and consistency to our work but also make it easier to collect, record, and use data in a way that will support more informed decision-making. Ultimately, this evolution enhances our ability to deliver a more connected and efficient service for those who depend on us.

CAPSA Visibility and Knowledge Sharing

CAPSA's learning continues to influence practice beyond the programme itself. Building on previous collaboration with King's College London through the Enriched study on social inclusion, academic publications have referenced CAPSA's work and Black Thrive Global's contribution.

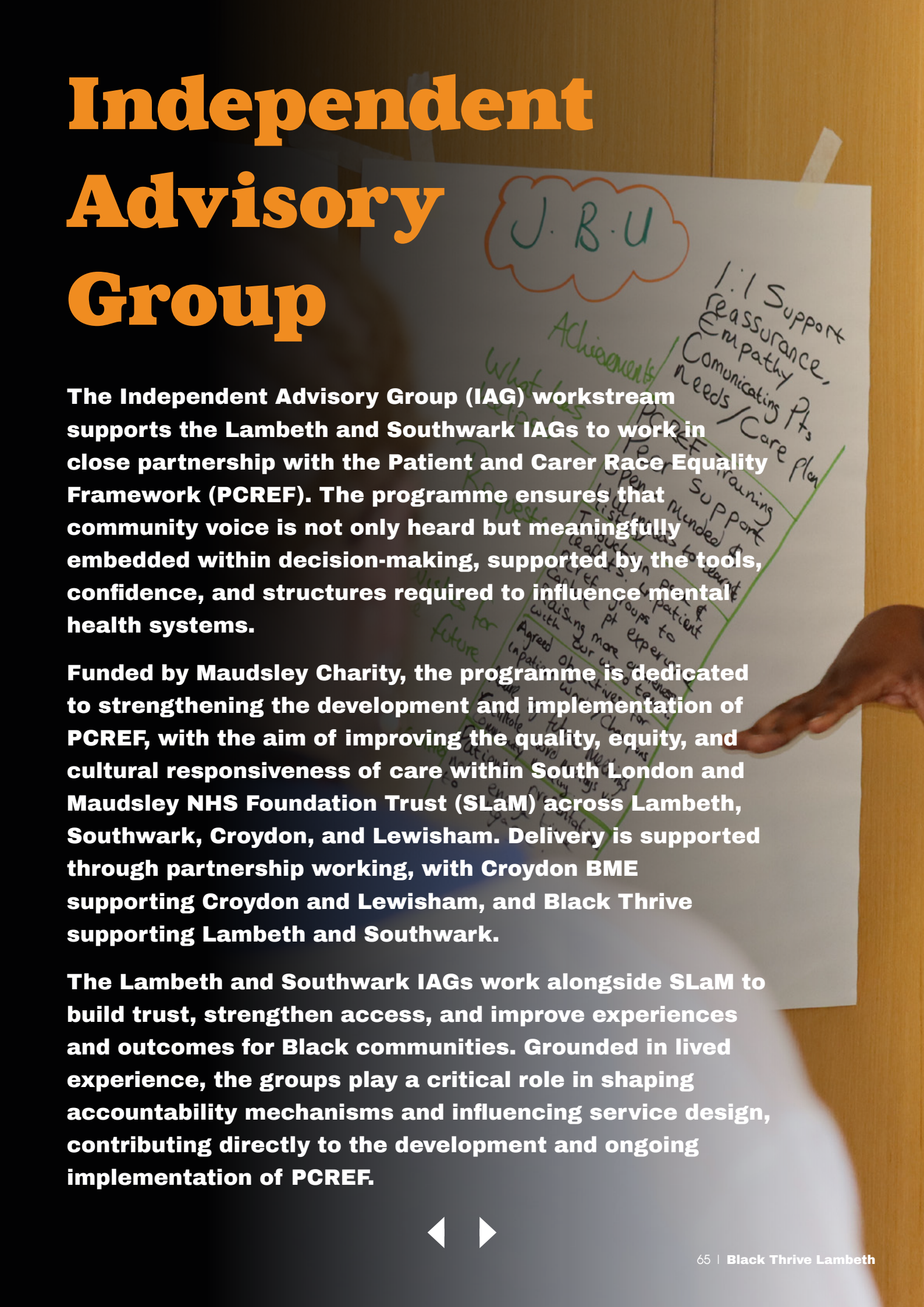
CAPSA's expertise has also been shared internationally, including presentations to a social policy cohort from the University of North Carolina. These sessions highlighted the importance of lived experience and personalised care within healthcare systems, particularly in addressing the impacts of historical and ongoing institutional racism on Black communities.

Contribution to the Culture of Care Programme

CAPSA played a central role in supporting NHS England's Culture of Care programme. Through regular participation in in-person and online training sessions, the team has shared lived experience insights and practical knowledge of inpatient environments, contributing to the development of training materials and delivery approaches.

This contribution will continue, with CAPSA supporting the wider programme and leading in-person sessions across NHS trusts, ensuring race equity, lived experience, and culturally responsive practice remain embedded within systems change efforts.

Independent Advisory Group



The Independent Advisory Group (IAG) workstream supports the Lambeth and Southwark IAGs to work in close partnership with the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF). The programme ensures that community voice is not only heard but meaningfully embedded within decision-making, supported by the tools, confidence, and structures required to influence mental health systems.

Funded by Maudsley Charity, the programme is dedicated to strengthening the development and implementation of PCREF, with the aim of improving the quality, equity, and cultural responsiveness of care within South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) across Lambeth, Southwark, Croydon, and Lewisham. Delivery is supported through partnership working, with Croydon BME supporting Croydon and Lewisham, and Black Thrive supporting Lambeth and Southwark.

The Lambeth and Southwark IAGs work alongside SLaM to build trust, strengthen access, and improve experiences and outcomes for Black communities. Grounded in lived experience, the groups play a critical role in shaping accountability mechanisms and influencing service design, contributing directly to the development and ongoing implementation of PCREF.

ORTUS
T O M M Y
H I L F I G E R
IN-PATIENT CHAMPION

Strengthening Trust, Accountability, and Collaboration

The IAG programme continues to focus on building strong relationships between community members with lived experience and senior system leaders. Black and racially minoritised communities continue to experience disproportionate levels of detention, mistrust, and unmet need within mental health services. The programme exists to challenge these inequities by creating spaces where lived experience, data, and institutional responsibility intersect.

Change Ideas Emerging from Lambeth

Lambeth IAG members have co-developed a set of Change Ideas focused on improving cultural responsiveness and staff engagement, including:

Cultural Awareness:

Embedding cultural awareness conversations into induction, appraisals, and supervision can make a positive difference.

This helps staff develop the skills to foster better engagement with Black service users and their carers.

Staff Knowledge and Awareness:

Encouraging staff to bring their whole selves to work helps create a welcoming environment.

Open discussions about culture in team meetings can foster deeper cultural understanding and empower staff to share their knowledge.

Change Ideas Emerging from Southwark

Southwark IAG members have focused on deepening learning and accountability through:

Co-learning and Cultural Humility:

Developing Cultural Humility training co-produced by service users, carers, and staff.

Staff Knowledge and Awareness:

Encouraging staff to bring their whole selves to work helps create a welcoming environment.

Open discussions about culture in team meetings can foster deeper cultural understanding and empower staff to share their knowledge.

PCREF Leadership Academy

Over the next year, Black Thrive will be rolling out the PCREF Leadership Academy. The Academy will nurture culturally rooted leadership across Lambeth, Southwark, Croydon, and Lewisham, supporting IAG members and residents to navigate and challenge systemic racism, advocate effectively, and influence local systems.

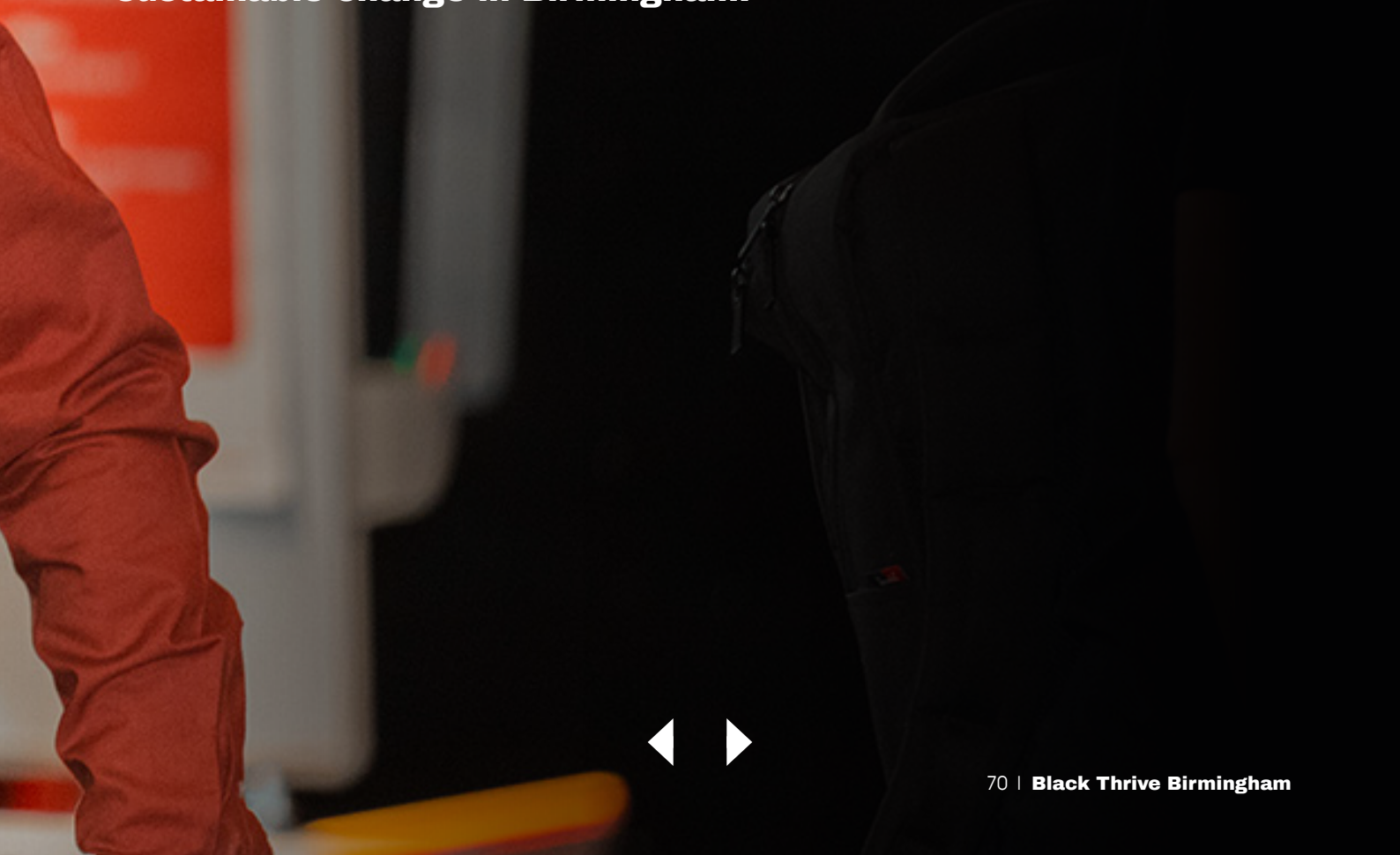
The Academy reflects a long-term commitment to strengthening community leadership as a core pillar of race equity, ensuring that those most impacted by inequality are supported to shape the systems that serve them.

Black Thrive Birmingham

Black Thrive Birmingham (BTB), in partnership with Catalyst 4 Change, leads a Black-led systems change approach to improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for Black communities across the city. Grounded in lived experience, community leadership, and accountability, the partnership works to challenge the structural inequalities that shape\ access to care, influence service delivery, and affect everyday wellbeing.

Over the past year, BTB strengthened Black leadership, deepened community engagement, and expanded its influence across statutory systems. Through initiatives such as the Ubuntu Coalition and the Black Carers Hub, the partnership supported community-led solutions, informed strategic decision-making, and contributed to the development of more culturally responsive pathways to care.

This Impact Report highlights key achievements, learning, and impact from the past year, demonstrating how Black-led systems leadership continues to drive meaningful and sustainable change in Birmingham.



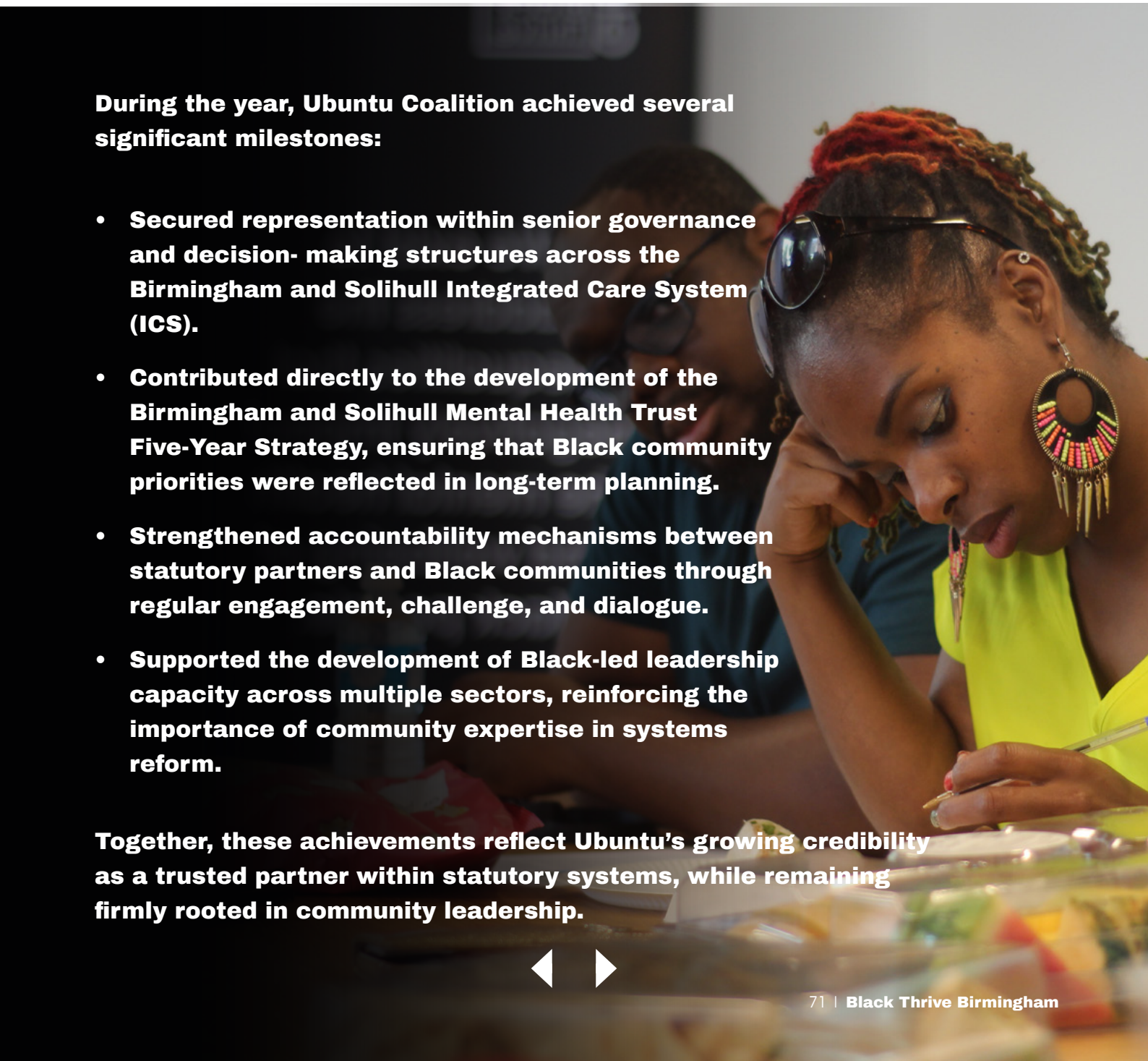
Ubuntu Coalition

Strengthening Black Leadership in Systems Change

The Ubuntu Coalition remains central to Black Thrive Birmingham's systems change approach. Established as a Black-led, community-driven leadership collective, Ubuntu brings together Black leaders from across health, social care, education, community, and voluntary sectors to influence decision-making and challenge structural inequalities in Birmingham's mental health system.

Over the past year, the Coalition has continued to grow in both reach and influence, strengthening its role as a credible voice for Black communities in strategic spaces.

Key Output and Achievements



During the year, Ubuntu Coalition achieved several significant milestones:

- **Secured representation within senior governance and decision- making structures across the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS).**
- **Contributed directly to the development of the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust Five-Year Strategy, ensuring that Black community priorities were reflected in long-term planning.**
- **Strengthened accountability mechanisms between statutory partners and Black communities through regular engagement, challenge, and dialogue.**
- **Supported the development of Black-led leadership capacity across multiple sectors, reinforcing the importance of community expertise in systems reform.**

Together, these achievements reflect Ubuntu's growing credibility as a trusted partner within statutory systems, while remaining firmly rooted in community leadership.

Building Trust and Influence

Trust-building remains a cornerstone of Ubuntu's approach. Over the year, the Coalition continued to prioritise:

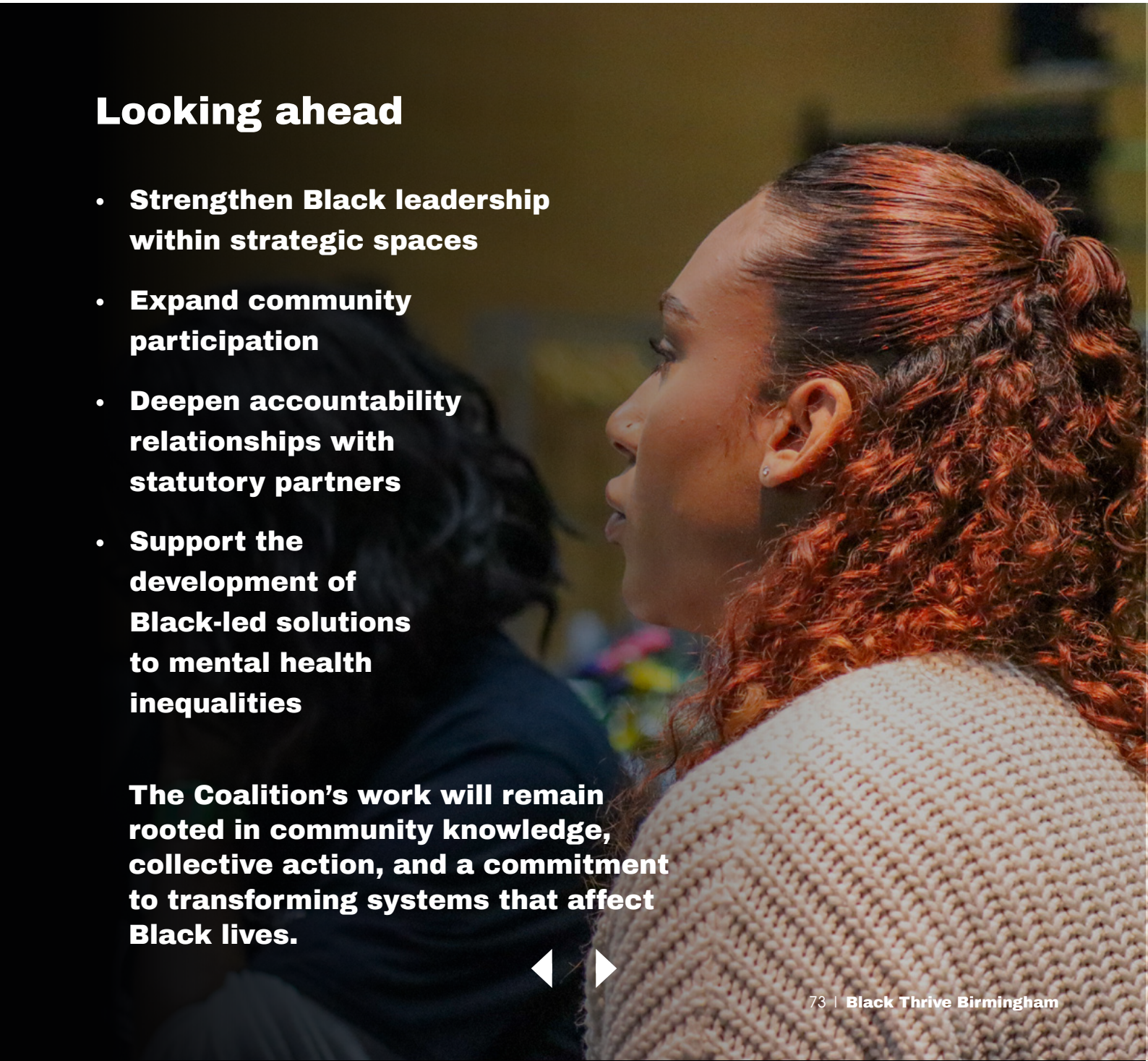
- Consistent engagement with community members
- Transparent communication with partners
- Collective decision-making processes
- Community accountability

By maintaining these principles, Ubuntu has strengthened its influence while ensuring that Black voices remain central to system-level change.

Impact on Strategic Decision-Making

Ubuntu's contribution to the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust's Five-Year Strategy marked a major step forward for Black-led systems leadership. Coalition members provided insight on:

- Structural racism within mental health pathways
- Barriers to culturally appropriate care
- The importance of community-led prevention and early intervention
- The need for accountability in service design
- As a result, the strategy now reflects a stronger commitment to race equity, community partnership, and culturally responsive practice.



Looking ahead

- **Strengthen Black leadership within strategic spaces**
- **Expand community participation**
- **Deepen accountability relationships with statutory partners**
- **Support the development of Black-led solutions to mental health inequalities**

The Coalition's work will remain rooted in community knowledge, collective action, and a commitment to transforming systems that affect Black lives.

Black Carers Hub

Supporting Black Carers in Birmingham

The Black Carers Hub was established to provide culturally responsive support for Black carers, recognising the unique challenges they face in navigating health and social care systems. The Hub aims to improve access to support, strengthen wellbeing outcomes, and ensure carers' voices are reflected in service design and delivery.

Over the reporting period, the Hub continued to expand its reach, deepen engagement with carers, and strengthen partnerships across Birmingham's health and voluntary sectors.

Key areas of impact

Outcome Area	Focus
Access	Improving awareness and access to culturally appropriate support
Experience	Enhancing carer experience within health and social care systems
Voice	Strengthening carer representation and influence
Wellbeing	Supporting mental health and emotional resilience

Through targeted engagement, the Hub supported carers to access information, connect with services, and participate in shaping local support

Community Engagement and Support

Carers engaged with the Hub through a range of support pathways, including:

- One-to-one support
- Group sessions
- Community events
- Partnership referrals

This multi-layered approach ensured that carers received practical support while also having opportunities to share experiences, build networks, and influence service improvement.

Systems Influence

The Black Carers Hub contributed to system-level change by:

- Feeding carers' experiences into local planning forums
- Supporting the development of culturally responsive service pathways
- Strengthening relationships between carers and statutory providers

This work helped ensure that Black carers' needs were better understood and addressed across Birmingham's care system.

Learning and reflection

- Across both the Ubuntu Coalition and the Black Carers Hub, several key learning points emerged:
- Trust takes time and consistency
- Black-led leadership strengthens system credibility
- Community knowledge is essential to effective service design
- Structural barriers still limit access to equitable care

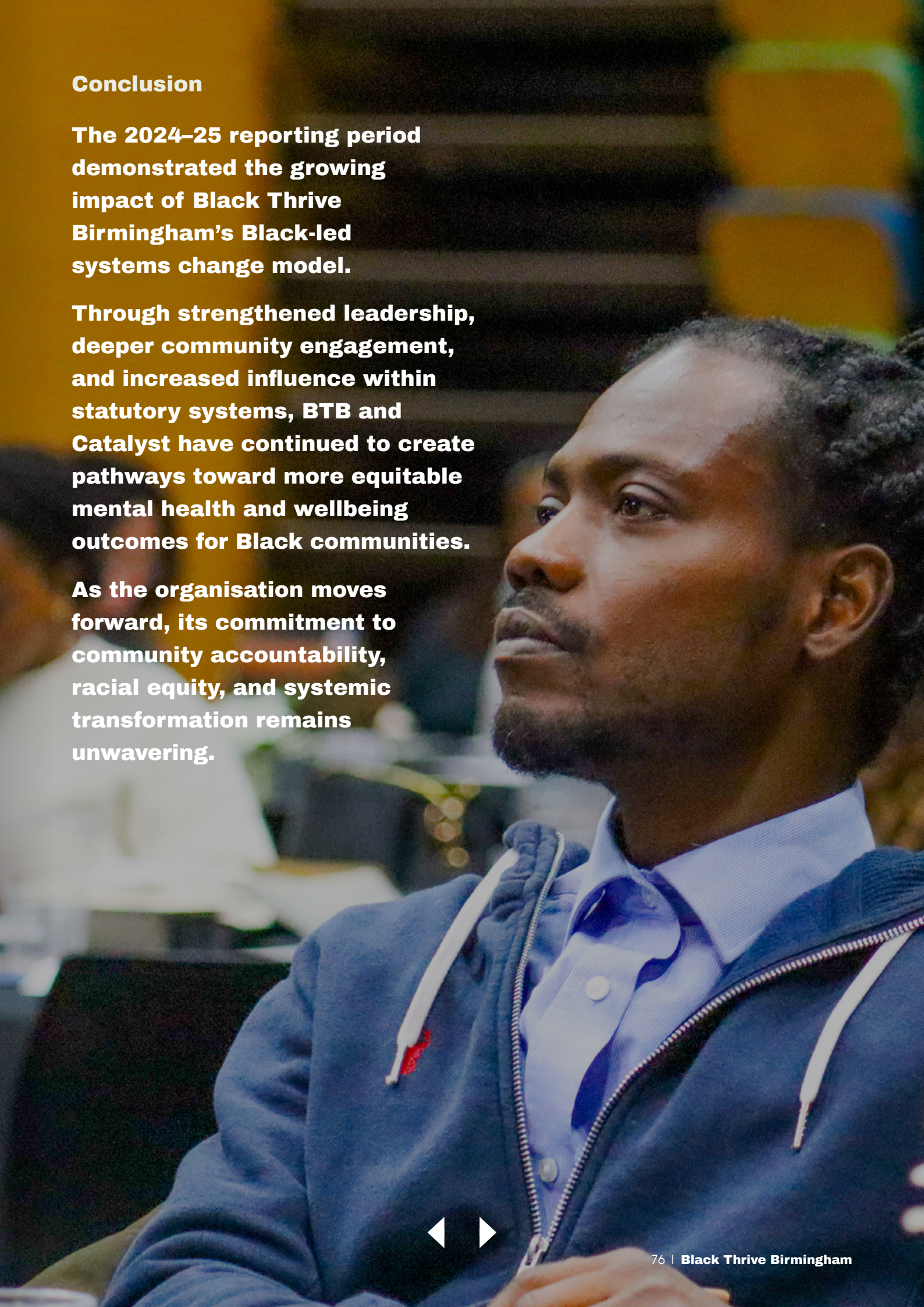
These insights will continue to inform Black Thrive Birmingham's approach to systems change and community engagement.

Conclusion

The 2024–25 reporting period demonstrated the growing impact of Black Thrive Birmingham's Black-led systems change model.

Through strengthened leadership, deeper community engagement, and increased influence within statutory systems, BTB and Catalyst have continued to create pathways toward more equitable mental health and wellbeing outcomes for Black communities.

As the organisation moves forward, its commitment to community accountability, racial equity, and systemic transformation remains unwavering.



Black Thrive Haringey

The 2024–2025 period marked a year of meaningful progress for Black Thrive Haringey, as the partnership continued its work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities by addressing the systemic inequities that shape everyday experiences of care, safety, and opportunity.

Black Thrive Haringey's approach is defined by the integration of lived experience, research, and systems change.

By connecting communities, institutions, and decision-makers, the partnership supports co-produced solutions that are not only responsive to community need, but capable of delivering lasting structural change.

Rather than solely documenting inequality, Black Thrive Haringey focuses on building the frameworks required to dismantle it. Throughout the year, community insight was transformed into

evidence, and evidence into action, through creative healing initiatives, storytelling, and strategic partnerships that challenged institutions to reflect, adapt, and improve.

Across all areas of work, Black Thrive Haringey has continued to act as a trusted bridge between communities and systems, creating space for honesty, accountability, and collective healing.

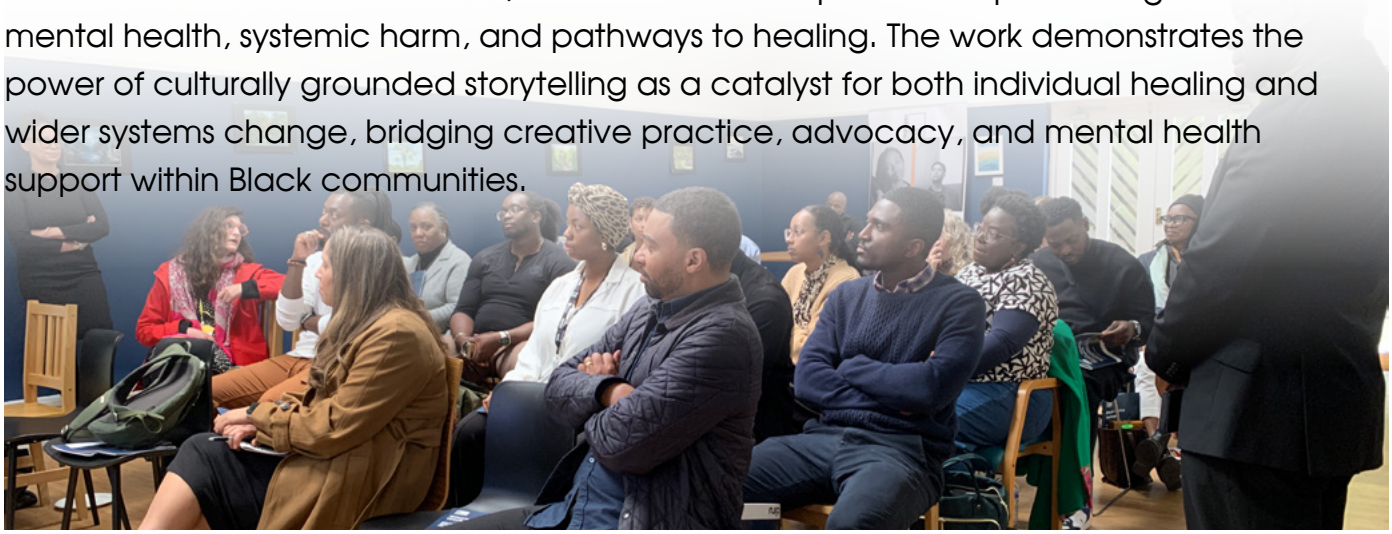
By centring Black voices and community leadership, the partnership has ensured that those most affected by inequality remain central to shaping the decisions that influence their lives.

Project Heal

Project Heal emerged from early conversations centred on healing within the Black community. These discussions evolved into a formal partnership between Black Thrive Lambeth and Black Thrive Haringey, grounded in a shared commitment to developing a healing-centred initiative that documents lived experiences of adversity and provides practical, culturally relevant resources to support recovery and wellbeing.

Alongside film production, significant progress was made during on the development of a healing directory and digital resource platform designed to provide accessible and culturally affirming support for individuals navigating trauma or beginning their healing journey. This platform was conceived as a sustainable legacy of Project Heal, offering signposting, storytelling, and lived experience resources to empower communities beyond the lifespan of the screenings.

Project Heal successfully engaged communities across boroughs, strengthened collaboration between localities, and created safe spaces for open dialogue around mental health, systemic harm, and pathways to healing. The work demonstrates the power of culturally grounded storytelling as a catalyst for both individual healing and wider systems change, bridging creative practice, advocacy, and mental health support within Black communities.



Time2Heal App

The Time2Heal App was developed as part of the Project Heal initiative in response to a clear need for a tangible, lasting resource to support individual healing journeys.

This need became especially evident during earlier Black Thrive Haringey docufilm screenings, where community members shared deeply personal experiences of trauma, resilience, and recovery, and expressed a desire for accessible support beyond facilitated spaces.

Guided by a core principle of "do no harm," the app was designed to meet individuals where they are, offering support that is safe, accessible, and empowering. Early planning and co-design discussions shaped the app's foundational components, including access to culturally relevant services, books, videos, audio resources, and daily affirmations.

Development of the Time2Heal App was led by Black Thrive Haringey from June 2024 and continued throughout the reporting period in close collaboration with specialist app development partners. By June 2025, the app functioned as a healing directory, guiding users through three introductory questions that personalise their experience and curate content aligned with their needs, interests, and stage of healing.

Alongside development, the team focused on promotion planning, testing, and refinement, with particular attention to accessibility, intuitive navigation, visual design, and inclusivity. This ensured the app was prepared for public release while remaining responsive to community feedback.

Time2Heal is positioned as a core element of Black Thrive Haringey's long-term healing infrastructure. It provides a scalable digital foundation through which culturally grounded healing resources can continue to evolve, expand, and support Black communities over time.

Diabetes UK Partnership

Black Thrive Haringey continued its partnership with Diabetes UK to address inequities in diabetes care and outcomes experienced by Black communities. As members of the Community Organisation Advisory Committee (COAC) in 2025, Black Thrive Haringey played an active role in shaping Diabetes UK's Tackling Inequity Strategy by bringing lived experience and community insight directly into national decision-making.

Through this partnership, Black Thrive Haringey supported the identification of barriers to equitable care, promoted culturally informed approaches, and amplified community voices to drive meaningful and systemic change in diabetes prevention, care, and support.

Haringey's Panel 4 Change

Black Thrive Haringey played a central and strategic role in leading the Haringey Panel 4 Change, a collaborative forum established to amplify community voice and ensure meaningful oversight of local systems, particularly in relation to the Metropolitan Police's

London Race Action Plan (LRAP). The Panel ensures that commitments to equity transparency, and community trust are translated into tangible actions. Co-chaired by Black Thrive Haringey and Detective Superintendent Ian Martin, the Panel convenes bi-monthly and brings together a diverse network of partners, including local community groups, youth and grassroots organisations, community advocates, Haringey Council, and the North London NHS Foundation Trust. This structure ensures that discussions are grounded in lived experience and that the voices of Haringey's Black communities are centred in shaping local decision-making.

The Panel provided an open and accountable platform to explore issues such as community safety, policing practices, and structural inequalities while working collaboratively to design practical, equity-driven solutions. Through its leadership and coordination,

Black Thrive Haringey has strengthened trust between statutory partners and the community, improving transparency in policing and ensuring that race equity remains embedded across local systems work. The partnership demonstrates how community-led collaboration can bridge divides, foster accountability, and influence change across multiple institutions.

Ultimately, Panel 4 Change reflects a shared vision: a fairer, safer, and more inclusive Haringey where Black communities are not only represented but actively shaping the systems that serve them.

SICKLE: The Docufilm

The Docufilm was commissioned by the NHS Red Cell Network following their engagement with our earlier film, Me, My Music and Mental Health. The Network approached us with the goal of creating a powerful, community-led film to raise awareness of sickle cell disorder, a condition still widely misunderstood and deeply connected to racial health inequalities.

Through a series of collaborative meetings and attendance at Red Cell Network workshops, we deepened our understanding of the significant knowledge gap surrounding the lived experiences of those affected by sickle cell and the disproportionate care they often receive.

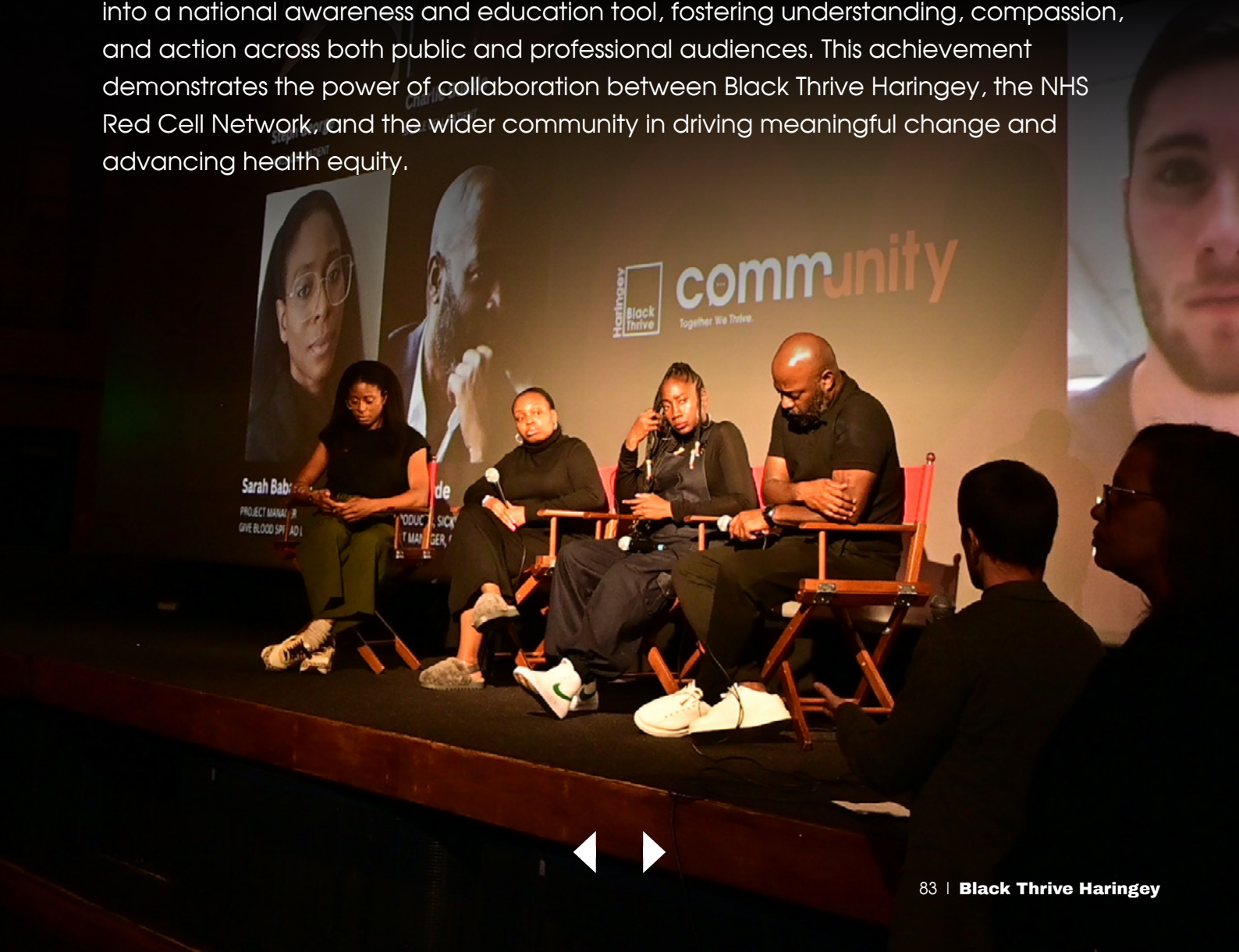
Recognising the urgency and importance of this issue, Black Thrive Haringey committed to producing a film that would raise awareness, educate, and amplify the voices of those most impacted while also helping healthcare professionals and communities better understand how to support individuals living with the condition.

SICKLE: The Docufilm

The screening campaign for SICKLE began with its premiere at the Everyman Cinema in Muswell Hill on 11 September 2024, where it received overwhelmingly positive feedback and sparked national interest in hosting additional screenings. Since then, the docufilm has been shown at events and venues across the UK, including Cambridge University, bringing together healthcare professionals and academics to explore lived experience and systemic change. To date, the film has been viewed by an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 people nationwide, reflecting its growing impact and resonance across both community and professional audiences. Its next major screening is set to take place in October 2025 at the ODEON Cinema in Wimbledon, continuing to expand the film's reach and influence.

A key highlight of SICKLE's success has been its integration into NHS staff training, marking a significant milestone in transforming community-led storytelling into professional education and systemic impact. The film is now being used to educate healthcare practitioners, deepen empathy, and improve the quality of care for people living with sickle cell disorder.

Through this ongoing partnership with the NHS Red Cell Network, SICKLE has evolved into a national awareness and education tool, fostering understanding, compassion, and action across both public and professional audiences. This achievement demonstrates the power of collaboration between Black Thrive Haringey, the NHS Red Cell Network, and the wider community in driving meaningful change and advancing health equity.



DIRECTED BY SMILAITAKE
SICKLE
DOCUFILM
The Red Cell Network
Haringey
Black Thrive
SICKLE CELL SOCIETY

Cultural Competency Training

The Cultural Competency Training was originally created and developed by Dr. Charles Willie in Wales, where it has achieved award-winning recognition for driving measurable change across statutory organisations, businesses, and the wider community. The programme has been widely celebrated for its impact, improving understanding, communication, and equity within services and helping to embed meaningful cultural awareness and inclusion across Welsh institutions.

Building on this proven success, Black Thrive Haringey has now partnered with Dr. Charles Willie to deliver the training across England, marking an important step in expanding its reach and influence nationally. The training is structured around four core modules: Disparities, Culture, Unconscious Bias, and Practical Recommendations. Each session combines interactive activities, case studies, and group exercises designed to challenge assumptions, increase cultural awareness, and inspire behavioural and organisational change.

This work provides organisations, healthcare providers, and systems with practical tools to better understand the disparities affecting our communities and to embed more culturally competent approaches within everyday practice. A key learning throughout this partnership has been the deep and often unseen impact of unconscious bias, not just within systems but within individuals. Recognising and addressing these biases is fundamental to achieving equitable and compassionate care.

Since the partnership began, we have already delivered the training internally to our own staff team as well as externally to a cohort of staff from the North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT). Building on this momentum, eight further training sessions are scheduled for delivery during the final quarter of 2025, reflecting commitment from organisations seeking to embed cultural competence into their practice.

Through this collaboration, we are proud to bring a proven, evidence-based training model to services and organisations across England that are genuinely committed to change. Our shared goal is to replicate the transformational impact seen in Wales, fostering culturally aware, inclusive, and equitable systems that drive lasting change from within.

North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT) Partnership

Our partnership with the North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT) has continued to strengthen over the past year, building on our shared commitment to advancing race equity within mental health care. Following earlier collaboration through the Trust's Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) working group, Black Thrive Haringey was formally commissioned in 2024 to deliver a series of community engagement events across Haringey. These sessions provided opportunities for local residents, service users, and carers to share their experiences and identify key priorities for improving race equity in mental health services.

A significant outcome from these events was the clear call from community members for NLFT staff to receive cultural competency training. In direct response, the Trust has now commissioned Black Thrive Haringey to deliver our Cultural Competency Training programme to eight cohorts of staff, ensuring that frontline practitioners and managers are better equipped to provide culturally informed and equitable care.

In 2025, NLFT also partnered with us to gather community feedback to inform the development of their new EDI Strategy. This collaboration ensured that the perspectives and lived experiences of local communities directly shaped the Trust's future priorities and approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

This partnership continues to demonstrate the impact of community-led systems change, translating dialogue into tangible institutional reform. Through this collaboration, NLFT is embedding cultural awareness, accountability, and equity into both its workforce and wider organisational culture, marking a significant step toward more inclusive and responsive mental health care.

Community Research Project

This community-led research project, delivered in partnership with North London Partnership Consortium (NLPC) and Community Information and Research Unit (CIRU), trained and compensated 30 local community members to act as peer researchers. The research was co-designed with participants and explored the intersection of mental health and policing within the Black community in Haringey, examining how these systems and experiences impact wellbeing, trust, and access to support.

By 2024, the project had reached its final stage, and in 2025, we received the completed report, marking a significant milestone in this multi-year collaboration. To share the findings and stimulate action, we hosted a report launch event on Wednesday 7th May 2025, attended by around 60 to 70 community members,

partners, organisations, and stakeholders. The event created an open and constructive space for discussion, where attendees reflected on the data, shared lived experiences, and considered how systems and statutory bodies could respond meaningfully to the evidence presented.

Following the launch, the report has been published and distributed widely across thecommunity and through our mailing list, ensuring accessibility and visibility.

The findings are now being used to inform local advocacy, partnership work, and systems conversations, particularly around improving mental health outcomes and addressing the disproportionate effects of policing on the Black community in Haringey.

This project illustrates how community-led research can turn lived experience into evidence and evidence into meaningful change.

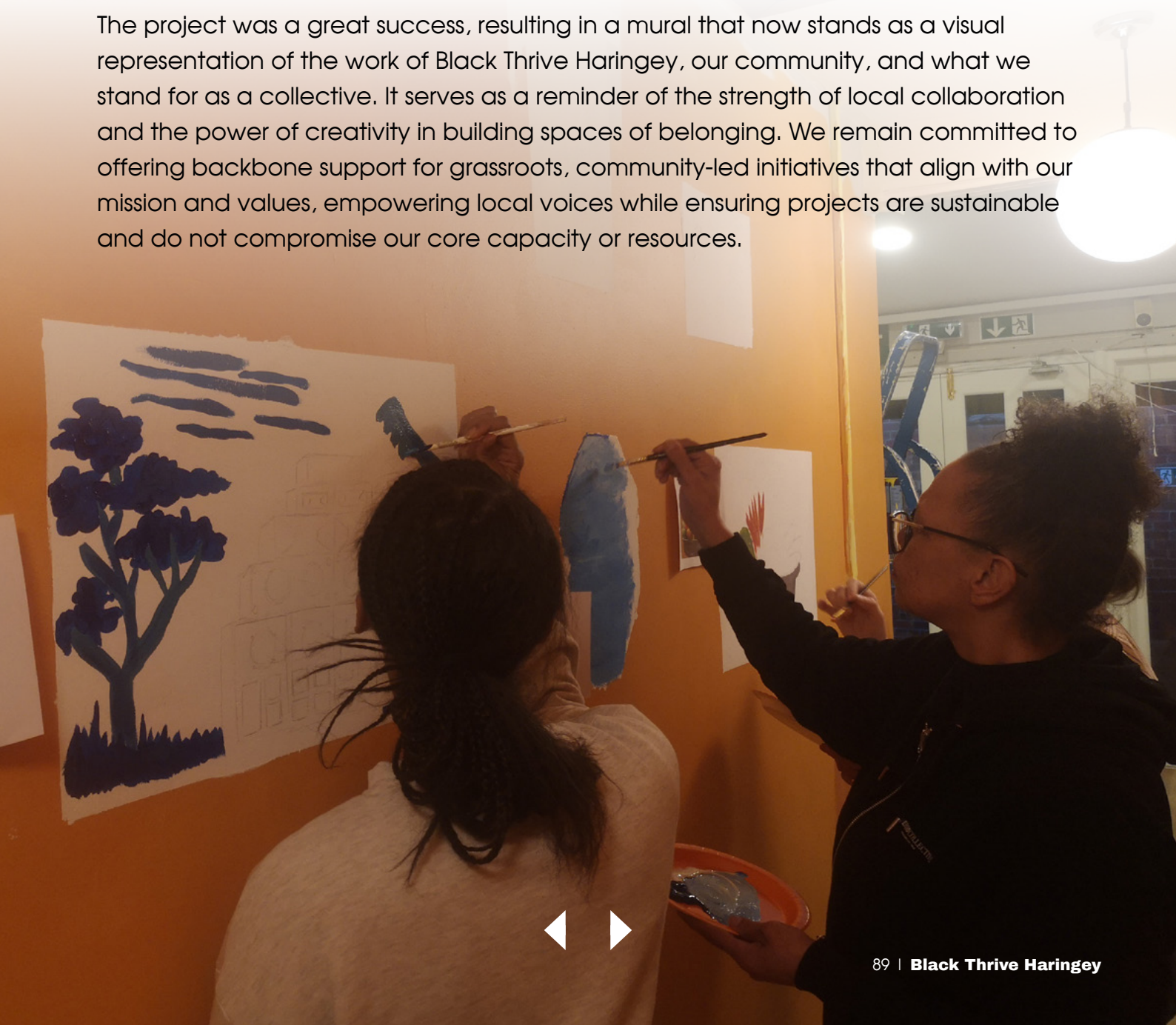
BLACK THRIVE HARINGEY
2024
COMMUNITY
ASSEMBLY
EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES
15
ESSENTIALS
FEAR OF GOD

Community Mural Project

In January 2025, we were approached by a local Black community artist and muralist from the London School of Muralism who proposed creating a mural that would reflect Black Thrive Haringey's mission, values, and connection to the community. The project was fully funded by the artist as part of her course submission, with Black Thrive Haringey providing backbone support, including coordination, space for the mural, and facilitation of community engagement workshops to inform the design.

The workshops, attended by 20 to 30 community members, provided a space for local voices to contribute ideas and imagery that represented collective identity, healing, and pride. Through this collaborative process, a shared vision emerged: a mural that conveys a warm, welcoming, and home-like space, featuring positive quotes, cultural symbolism, and imagery that captures the essence of community, care, and culture.

The project was a great success, resulting in a mural that now stands as a visual representation of the work of Black Thrive Haringey, our community, and what we stand for as a collective. It serves as a reminder of the strength of local collaboration and the power of creativity in building spaces of belonging. We remain committed to offering backbone support for grassroots, community-led initiatives that align with our mission and values, empowering local voices while ensuring projects are sustainable and do not compromise our core capacity or resources.



Research Partnership

Black Thrive Haringey has partnered with Goldsmith's University, Professor Stafford Scott, and Forensic Architecture to deliver a critical research project investigating deaths in police custody, with a particular focus on the use of prone restraint, the controversial justification of "excited delirium," and "Acute Behavioural Disturbance" (ABD). Originally a medical term, ABD has increasingly been used by law enforcement and coroners to justify deaths occurring during restraint, particularly among individuals experiencing mental health crises from Black communities.

This research examines how these justifications intersect with systemic racism and the disproportionate impact on Black individuals during encounters with the police. By interrogating the flawed application of ABD, excited delirium, and the dangers of restraint techniques such as the prone position, the project seeks to expose discriminatory practices and advocate for reforms that prioritise safety, accountability, and justice.

Combining Forensic Architecture's investigative expertise with the lived experiences of Black communities, the project represents an innovative model of community-led, evidence-based advocacy. It aims to challenge harmful institutional practices, address racial and mental health disparities, and influence policy change at both local and national levels.

Black Thrive Haringey and Forensic Architecture are working to secure funding to advance this vital initiative, driving meaningful change, strengthening accountability, and working toward a justice system that protects rather than endangers Black lives.

The 2024–2025 period marked a year of meaningful progress for Black Thrive Haringey, as the partnership continued its work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Black communities by addressing the systemic inequities that shape everyday experiences of care, safety, and opportunity.

Black Thrive Haringey's approach is defined by the integration of lived experience, research, and systems change. By connecting communities, institutions, and decision-makers, the partnership supports co-produced solutions that are not only responsive to community need, but capable of delivering lasting structural change.

Rather than solely documenting inequality, Black Thrive Haringey focuses on building the frameworks required to dismantle it. Throughout the year, community insight was transformed into evidence, and evidence into action, through creative healing initiatives, storytelling, and strategic partnerships that challenged institutions to reflect, adapt, and improve.

Across all areas of work, Black Thrive Haringey has continued to act as a trusted bridge between communities and systems, creating space for honesty, accountability, and collective healing. By centring Black voices and community leadership, the partnership has ensured that those most affected by inequality remain central to shaping the decisions that influence their lives.

Photo: Ninthgrid.com

Glossary of terms

Black Carers Hub	**A culturally responsive support service for Black carers in Birmingham.**
BQT	**Black Queer & Thriving – A Black Thrive Lambeth programme centring the voices, leadership and wellbeing of Black LGBTQ+ communities.**
BTB	**Black Thrive Birmingham – The Birmingham-based Black Thrive partnership.**
BTG	**Black Thrive Global – The national backbone organisation coordinating the Black Thrive Collective and leading systems change work across the UK.**
BTH	**Black Thrive Haringey – The Haringey-based Black Thrive partnership.**
BTL	**Black Thrive Lambeth – The Lambeth-based Black Thrive partnership.**
CA	**Community Assemblies – Culturally rooted forums bringing together community members, grassroots organisations and statutory partners to influence decision-making and systems change.**
Catalyst 4 Change	**Black Thrive Birmingham's local delivery partner.**
CIRU	**Community Information and Research Unit**
CoC	**Culture of Care – An NHS England programme focused on improving inpatient mental health care with a specific emphasis on race equity.**
CYPF	**Children, Young People and Families – A Black Thrive Lambeth workstream focused on improving outcomes for children, young people and families.**
Fund the Hubs	**A national campaign calling for early mental health support hubs for young people.**

GDPR	**General Data Protection Regulation – UK data protection legislation governing the handling of personal information.**
Healing Directory	**A culturally grounded wellbeing resource hub developed by Black Thrive Haringey.**
IAG	**Independent Advisory Group – Community groups working with NHS Trusts to support the implementation of the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework.**
ICS	**Integrated Care System – A partnership of NHS, local authority and voluntary sector organisations.**
KCL	**King's College London – A partner academic institution.**
LA	**Leadership Academy – A capacity-building programme supporting leadership development across Black Thrive and partner organisations.**
LGBTQ+	**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (plus other identities) – An inclusive term for diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.**
Lived Experience	**Knowledge gained through personal experience of systems, services, trauma or inequality.**
NCCMH	**National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health – An organisation supporting evidence-based mental health policy and practice.**
NCISH	**National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide – A research programme analysing suicide and homicide data related to mental health services.**
NLFT	**North London NHS Foundation Trust – A key statutory partner in Haringey.**
NLCF	**National Lottery Community Fund – A major funder supporting Thriving Futures and systems change work.**

Glossary of terms

NLPC	**North London Partnership Consortium**
Panel 4 Change	**A community-led forum supporting race equity oversight and systems accountability in Haringey.**
PCREF	**Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework – An NHS framework aimed at reducing racial inequalities in mental health care.**
QI	**Quality Improvement – A structured approach to improving services and outcomes**
RIO	**Research Institute and Observatory – Black Thrive's research arm focused on race equity, evidence and evaluation.**
Roots to Wings Toolkit	**A whole-school mental health and wellbeing resource developed by Black Thrive Lambeth**
S&S	**Stop and Search – A policing practice examined through Black Thrive's research and advocacy.**
SEL ICB	**South East London Integrated Care Board – The NHS body responsible for health commissioning in South East London.**
SICKLE Docufilm	**A film raising awareness of sickle cell disorder and racial health inequalities.**
SLaM	**South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust – A major NHS mental health provider working with Black Thrive.**
TF	**Thriving Futures – Black Thrive's systems change programme supporting local partnerships and national learning**

Thrive & Vibe Programme	**A youth wellbeing and creative programme co-produced with Young Researchers in Lambeth.**
Time2Heal App	**A digital healing directory offering personalised wellbeing resources.**
Ubuntu Coalition	**A Black-led leadership collective influencing mental health systems in Birmingham.**
VCSE	**Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise – Community organisations working alongside Black Thrive.**
Working Groups	**Community-led groups shaping programme priorities and delivery across localities.**
Youth Collective	**A partnership with the Southbank Centre supporting youth arts and wellbeing.**