

Scaling Impact, Strengthening People

2024/2025
Impact Report



Contents

03 CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOREWORD

04 SETTING THE SCENE

08 OUR SERVICES & IMPACT

28 BUILDING RESILIENCE

04	Year in Numbers
05	Major Impact Highlights
06	Voices from the Community
08	Early Help Edgbaston & Northfield
10	Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme
12	Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership
16	Social Prescribing
18	Solihull Lifestyle Service
20	Carers@Heart
22	North Solihull Active Travel Social Prescribing
24	Health and Wellbeing Coaches
26	Household Support Fund
28	Financial Performance
30	Governance and Leadership
32	Partnerships and Collaborations
34	Marketing & Promotion
36	Contact Us

CONTENT INDEX

SETTING THE SCENE

- » Foreword
- » Our Year in Numbers
- » Major Impact Highlight
- » What People Said

OUR SERVICES & IMPACT

BUILDING RESILIENCE

PAGE 3



2024/2025 Impact Report

Foreword

Welcome to our 2024/25 Impact Report – another year that’s been busy, brilliant, and at times, quite tough... but always full of purpose and people who care deeply about what they do.

This year, we’ve seen some amazing progress across our services. Our Early Help team in Edgbaston & Northfield has grown again, and the feedback we’ve had from partners and audits has been so positive. We’re also continuing to use services such as the “Multibank” and our own Gateway Grants to help people with the essentials – something that’s made a real difference during a time when many people are still struggling with the cost of living.

In Solihull, our Lifestyle Service continues to thrive — with more referrals than ever before, great outcomes around weight management and social isolation, and a brilliant enrolment rate. We’ve also extended our work in Active Travel, training local health professionals and running new “Come and Try” events that are reaching people who wouldn’t usually get involved.

Our Social Prescribing team has had a big year too — we continue to work with all our PCNs plus a new one! We’ve seen referral numbers continue to rise, we’ve welcomed a new Service Lead, got all our Social Prescribing team trained in Mental Health First Aid, and even had the

Lord Mayor join us for National Social Prescribing Day!

And across Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership — both Black Country and BSol — the level of engagement we’ve had from families, especially from seldom-heard voices and neonatal parents, has been amazing. We’ve seen events, surveys, listening sessions, peer reviews... all of which are helping to shape maternity and neonatal services in a way that truly reflects people’s voices.

There’s lots more I could say — from our Carers@Heart service supporting over 700 carers since launch, to our Health and Wellbeing Coaches doing fantastic work supporting people with mental health issues through the use of personalised plans and community referrals. It’s all in the report, and I really hope you enjoy reading it.

As ever, I’m incredibly proud of the team here at Gateway — their resilience, their warmth, and the way they respond to change with solutions, not excuses. Thank you to everyone who’s been part of our journey this year: staff, partners, volunteers and of course, the people we’re here to support.

This is now my third year as Chief Executive and it continues to be such a privilege. I still feel as lucky as ever to be working alongside such a passionate, creative and supportive team. There’s always more to do — but when I see how far we’ve come, and the care that goes into everything we do, it fills me with pride and hope for what’s ahead.



Joanne Harper
Chief Executive

Our Year in Numbers




 **44,848 hours of support provided**


– equal to 5 years of nonstop support, day and night!



 **556 lifestyle checks delivered –**

– enough to fill six double-decker buses with people getting a health MOT




 **200+ fuel bank vouchers issued**


– small cards, big difference: warmth, light, and peace of mind.




 **100% of clients set wellbeing goals**


– and every single referrer got updates, like sending a postcard from every step of the journey!



 **10,885 individuals supported**

– enough to fill Birmingham Symphony Hall five times over!



 **25,452 visits to our website**

– a 772% surge that proves our digital home is busier than ever.



 **48% SLS clients achieved ≥5% weight loss**

– picture nearly 350 people each putting down five heavy bags of sugar for good!




 **A rise of 11% more men joined us for health support**

– showing our Marketing initiatives have been effective in this area


Major Impact Highlight

 **Data and Digital: Building Smarter Systems**

We've made big moves in strengthening our internal systems and reporting. From **Plinth rollout in Social Prescribing**, to the **marketing calendar for service leads**, and **new reporting templates and auto-calculators**, we're modernising how we track, share and improve our impact. Teams created digital admin systems, enhanced triaging methods, and launched group-based support pilots — all designed by staff, for staff, to reduce admin, boost quality, and streamline user journeys.

 **Website Relaunch Drives 8x More Users**

This year, we relaunched the Gateway Family Services website with a new user-first design, interactive features, and optimised content across services. The result? **A 772% increase in visits, 854% rise in new users, and stronger visibility via Google Search.** The website now acts not just as an online brochure, but a genuine tool to help people find support, access referrals, and learn about our impact — all optimised for mobile, desktop and tablet.

 **Investment in People and Purpose**

The Board committed surplus funds to enhance staff wellbeing and development. This included **dedicated funds for training, wellbeing activities, and the Gateway Grants fund for clients.** A strategic review of staff training and development is now underway, reaffirming our belief that sustainable impact starts with a skilled, supported, and motivated team.

 **Social Prescribing Retains All PCNs**

In a year where many social prescribing services across the UK faced uncertainty, we're proud to **continue our work with all PCNs and started work with a new one.** The service received a rise in referrals and successfully embedded Mental Health First Aid training across the entire SPLW team. We also glad that all our Social Prescribing Link Workers are now trained as Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA England), marking a major step forward in providing compassionate, informed frontline care.

 **Launch of the Gateway Support Grants Programme**

In October 2024, we formally launched the **Gateway Support Grants Programme** — giving frontline staff the ability to directly apply for funding on behalf of clients who need practical help. The grant supports items or services that individuals are struggling to access or afford, from **GP letters and school travel costs to physical aids or household essentials.** This initiative was championed by **Gateway's Board** as part of their commitment to practical, person-centred support. Staff uptake has been strong, and we continue to encourage applications where it can make a real difference in someone's life.

What People Said

At the heart of Gateway’s work are the voices of the people we support. Numbers and outcomes matter, but it’s the words of clients, carers, and partners that truly show the difference we make. This section brings together a selection of quotes and reflections — honest, unfiltered feedback that highlights the impact of our services on everyday lives. From small steps toward confidence to life-changing support at critical moments, these voices remind us why we do what we do.

“

We didn’t just plant trees, we planted hope, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

”

Chris Hoare
ENNS Funded project



“

You’ve been the light in my darkest days, every service you’ve connected me with has been brilliant!

”

Lily, Mother,
Social Prescribing Client



“

Really great service. I was contacted 2 days after I referred in and they really took their time to understand my concerns.

”

SLS Client



and More!

“

The Service has been life changing for me. It’s not only helped me tackle the financial hardship I was facing but also got my PIP sorted out. The prescriber was very good, she listened to me and referred me to a benefits advice service, which provided me with the guidance I desperately needed.

”

Client
Social Prescribing



“

I’m not ‘cured’ - I still have anxious moments. But now I know what to do with them. They don’t control me anymore. I wish I’d reached out for help sooner. I spent so long thinking I should be able to handle it all on my own.

”

Client
Health & Wellbeing Coaches


“

I feel more in control of my health. I have more energy, and we really like the way Janet run’s the course, making everyone feel relaxed and at ease. I’m looking forward to spending quality time with my family without feeling so tired all the time.

”

Ms Kaur, SLS Client
Weight Management Course



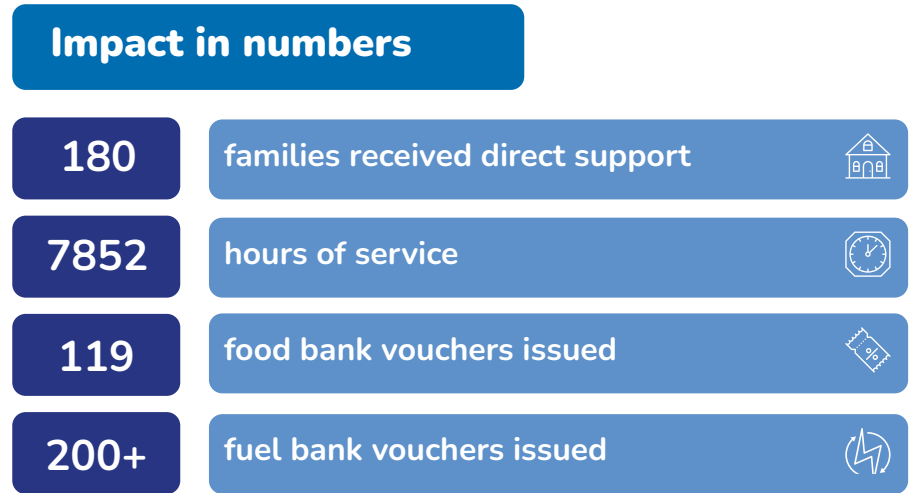
 Our Early Help team continues to play a central role in supporting families across Birmingham — offering practical, preventative support that helps avoid crisis and strengthens long-term wellbeing. This year marked the full embedding of our **Northfield team**, alongside our established work in Edgbaston, as part of **Birmingham’s** evolving **Family Hub** model.

The team now includes **two Family Support Workers (FSWs)** and **one Service Lead**, with plans underway to recruit five more FSWs thanks to additional funding. The service is delivered in partnership with Birmingham Children’s Trust (BCT) and contributes to the local Best Start for Life priorities — supporting families from pregnancy through to age two.

As well as providing 1:1 support, the team regularly attends Family Hub drop-ins, contributes to multi-agency panels, and works closely with schools, health visitors, and partner organisations. We’ve made strong progress in building citywide relationships with other family support organisations, while recognising the need to strengthen links with perinatal and postnatal professionals to enhance early-stage support. We also began supporting families with essentials

via the Multibank, helping address cost-of-living-related hardship with dignity. Feedback from partners has been extremely positive, and we’re pleased to report a strong audit outcome that reflects the team’s professionalism and commitment.

As ever, we’re working in a challenging environment — with changing stakeholder priorities sometimes shifting focus quickly — but we remain rooted in a trauma-informed, whole-family approach that puts the right help in the right place, at the right time.



About Early Help?

We deliver Early Help support in Edgbaston and Northfield, providing timely intervention to build family resilience and prevent challenges from escalating. We bring together families, professionals, and communities to create positive change.

- Our support includes:
- Family & School Partnership
 - Financial Guidance & Debt Management
 - Parenting Support & Advice
 - Housing & Employment Assistance
 - SEND Support
 - Community Development & Connection

Follow:  

The Impact: A Brighter Flat, A Brighter Future: Jamie-Lee’s Turning Point

When Jamie-Lee (name changed), a single mother of three, first connected with support services, she was barely holding on. Living in a cramped, mould-ridden second-floor flat with no lift, she had to carry her son Khurrum, who has complex needs, up and down the stairs daily. All three of her children have special educational needs, and the weight of managing it alone — without local family support — had taken a serious toll on her mental health.

It wasn’t just the physical strain. Jamie-Lee had fled domestic abuse and was starting again from scratch. Her youngest, Zenaya, had started banging her head against the wall; the only helmet she could afford wasn’t suitable. Furniture was scarce. The noise complaints from neighbours added yet more pressure.

That’s when Mira Rashid stepped in.

Through gentle, consistent support, Mira helped Jamie-Lee apply for vital schemes and grants. A proper helmet and referrals for specialist care were secured for Zenaya. Fresh beds and safety equipment were arranged, and even the flat began to feel more like a home thanks to a DIY grant and decorating help. Jamie-Lee was also referred to Anawim for emotional support around domestic abuse, and to Mencap and the Carer’s Hub to help with long-term care needs.

With school transport now sorted, Jamie-Lee is finally getting some rest. She’s eating better, feeling brighter, and stepping into her role as a mum with newfound energy.

“I can be a better mum now,” she said — and the glow in her voice said it all.

Challenges

Despite strong progress, several challenges have shaped delivery this year. Capacity is stretched for our family support workers. Many referred families face homelessness, where long waiting lists and limited statutory responses cause frustration and uncertainty. Families of children with SEND often face delays in accessing support, and gaps in training make navigating these cases harder. The current 4–6 week intervention model, designed for short-term support, is not always suitable for families with complex, ongoing needs, requiring us to stretch resources and adapt flexibly.

Future Goals

- Deliver further training on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and SEND
- Launch group support sessions to enhance peer support
- Streamline referral pathways to improve access and reduce delay
- Continue investing in staff wellbeing as service demand grows

» Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme



Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme (ENNS) has gone from strength to strength this year, continuing to connect older adults with local activities, reduce social isolation, and build community resilience across the constituency. The scheme has placed greater focus on partnership working, diversity of provision, and warm, inclusive outreach.

A seasonal highlight was our Keep Warm & Well events, held over the winter months. These events provided welcoming spaces for both adults aged 18–49 with additional needs and adults aged 50+, connecting residents with service providers, community groups and support in a warm, friendly environment. The events showcased ENNS’s continued role in cost-of-living resilience, inclusion and preventative wellbeing.

Our Community Development Worker (CDW) supported an increased number of microgrant-funded assets, helping more small organisations deliver hyper-local provision. Our social media presence also grew, giving greater visibility to funded groups and encouraging wider community participation.

In terms of strategy and learning, our CDW team took part in regular cross-service meetings, sharing good practice and strengthening delivery across constituencies. We also maintained regular attendance at steering group meetings, helping build connections with Birmingham Adult Social Care and shape joined-up, local responses.

Through all of this, ENNS has continued to act not just as a funder, but as a community enabler — supporting older adults and adults with additional needs to age well, stay connected and access trusted, local support.

Impact in numbers

34

microgrants awarded (Up to £500)



15

small grants awarded (Up to £10,000)



200+

assets mapped



Multiple training sessions commissioned and delivered, including; Digital Skills Marketing Workshop; Impact Measures & Reporting Training for Edgbaston Community Organisations; Memory Matters - Dementia Awareness;



» Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme



About ENNS?

In partnership with Age UK Birmingham, Gateway Family Services continues to deliver the Edgbaston Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS), working tirelessly to combat loneliness and isolation among adults aged 18 to 49 with additional needs and those aged 50 and above. The scheme collaborates with local groups, facilities, and agencies by creating a supportive network in Edgbaston, connecting residents to community opportunities that enhance their wellbeing and independence.

Follow:    

The Impact: From Barren Land to Blossoming Orchard: How a Citizen-Led Project Transformed a Community

In the heart of the Waterworks Estate, a forgotten patch of land is blossoming into something truly extraordinary — thanks to the determination of one resident and the spirit of many.

Chris Hoare, a local of North Edgbaston, had watched the once-vibrant space decay post-COVID, turning into an overgrown dumping ground. But where others saw decline, Chris saw potential. Rallying neighbours, he envisioned a public orchard filled with fruit trees, vegetables, and community life.

“I just thought, why wait? We could make something brilliant ourselves,” Chris recalled.

With support from Groundworks, local businesses, and national organisations like Tesco, HS2, and Starbucks, the Waterworks Estate Orchard Project took root. Volunteers cleared debris, built raised beds—including ones for children and

wheelchair users—and planted the first seeds of transformation.

Last autumn, their first harvest of peas, beans, and pumpkins marked a proud milestone. Now, new funding has secured fencing, tools, and plans for native fruit trees and wildflowers. Alongside planting days, seasonal events and creative workshops have made the orchard a lively community hub.

The challenges were real, but so was the resolve. “Every hurdle brought us closer,” said Chris. “We didn’t just grow food—we grew friendships.” What started as a neglected space is now a thriving symbol of grassroots action. And Chris, now part of the area’s Steering Group, continues to sow seeds of change wherever he goes. body allows, we meet at each other’s houses for delicious food and company.”

Challenges

The ENNS faced several challenges this year. Team changes required extra onboarding to maintain consistency, while Edgbaston’s large and varied geography created uneven visibility and engagement. In some neighbourhoods, building trust took longer, demanding persistent presence. Sole traders remained ineligible for funding, limiting work with grassroots connectors, and delivery roles across partners were not always balanced, causing coordination issues. A further concern is the difficulty in sourcing suitable assets for adults with additional needs — a gap that continues to restrict provision despite ongoing efforts.

Future Goals

- Explore volunteer roles to enhance delivery and expand reach
- Plan and deliver joint training and events across constituencies to streamline and strengthen practice
- Broaden participation, especially in under-engaged parts of the constituency
- Improve support for small providers and promote greater inclusivity in language, venues and messaging

» Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership



The Black Country MNVP continues to make strong progress in 2024–25, delivering consistently across all four localities: Walsall, Wolverhampton, Dudley, and Sandwell & West Birmingham.

The team now includes 2 Wolverhampton Leads, 1 Dudley Lead, 1 Walsall Lead, 1 MMUH Lead, and 1 Black Country Neonatal Lead, supported by the shared Service Lead. This structure provides coverage across the region and ensures families in each area have a dedicated route to feed back on their maternity and neonatal care.

The team has focused on both breadth and depth of engagement. Alongside general outreach, there has been dedicated work with bereaved families, neonatal parents, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, recognising the persistent inequalities in maternity outcomes. By participating in LMNS Insight Visits, peer reviews, and 15 Steps events at Walsall Manor and New Cross Hospitals, the MNVP has been able to ensure that service user feedback directly influences how Trusts evaluate and improve the care environment.

A key strength has been building trust and visibility in local communities, often working with voluntary and community sector organisations to reach parents who may not usually engage with formal feedback channels. Quarterly MNVP meetings have provided structured opportunities for families and stakeholders to share experiences, with learnings taken back to Trusts for action.

In a complex maternity landscape, the Black Country MNVP has proven its ability to act as a bridge between families and services — ensuring that no voice is overlooked, and that system leaders are held to account for creating safer, more responsive, and more inclusive care.

Impact in numbers

144

new service users engaged



44

events hosted/attended (14 Quarterly Meetings)



135

service user stories shared across Trusts



48

participants from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities



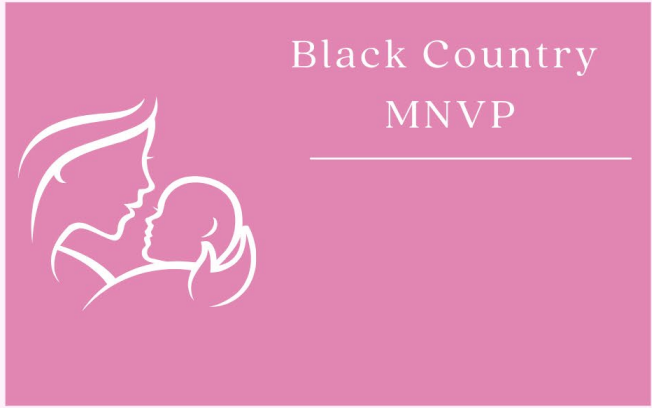
» Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership



About MNVP?

A Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) is a team including maternity professionals and service users who provide feedback about local maternity and neonatal systems. Gateway Family Services facilitates MNVPs across Birmingham & Solihull and the Black Country, with dedicated coordinators supporting each area. Our mission is to amplify women's and families' voices through listening events, surveys, and hospital visits to improve services.

Follow: 



Challenges

The Black Country MNVP experienced a number of specific challenges this year. Purdah restrictions in May and June temporarily halted public-facing work during a key period, reducing visibility and momentum. Recruitment also proved difficult, with some Lead roles not fully filled or contracted hours not consistently fulfilled, which created gaps in coverage. In addition, awareness of the MNVP offer remained limited in certain communities, leading to lower levels of participation in listening events and engagement activities.

Future Goals

- Align Lead hours fairly across all Black Country areas.
- Use the Chatty Bus to increase outreach in target communities (e.g., Walsall).
- Strengthen use of consistent, familiar venues to boost attendance at events.
- Make the Neonatal Lead role substantive.
- Explore creation of a Partner Lead role.

» Social Prescribing



This year, our Social Prescribing service has continued to grow in reach and recognition. Working with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and community partners, our Link Workers supported thousands of patients to address the root causes of poor health — from isolation to housing, financial stress, and mental wellbeing — through time, space, and personalised support.

We retained delivery across all PCNs, with North Solihull strategically split into two localities (North Solihull and Sheldon) to better meet population needs. A new Service Lead joined in September 2025, adding capacity and supporting a more joined-up approach across a growing caseload.

All SPLWs were trained as Mental Health First Aiders through MHFA England, strengthening our trauma-informed approach. Partnerships deepened, with collaborations including Shelter Birmingham, Birmingham & Solihull Women’s Aid, Age UK Birmingham, Turn2us, Citizens Advice, and the Carers Trust — ensuring faster and more effective responses to complex needs.

We also delivered Social Prescribing Community Days with several GP surgeries, hosted carers’ events, launched the Solihull Arts and Crafts Group, and started a monthly Community Drop-in at Elmwood Family Hub — creating welcoming spaces for connection and wellbeing.

Our second National Social Prescribing Day was attended by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, who presented awards recognising our team’s dedication. Looking ahead, the launch of a new case management system (Plinth) in 2025/26 will enhance reporting, quality assurance, and data insight, ensuring the service continues to adapt and demonstrate value across Birmingham and Solihull.

Impact in numbers



» Social Prescribing



About Social Prescribing?

Social Prescribers help patients by connecting them to organisations for further support around patient’s social needs such as food bank access, signposting to benefit services, connecting patients to community groups, and befriending services to name a few. The Social Prescribing Services’ sixteen Prescribers support ten Primacy Care Networks and around seventy GP Surgeries.

Follow:  

The Impact:
Empowering a Patient to Overcome Barriers

When Yasmin (name changed) was referred to Emma Finn, a social prescriber, the GP’s note simply mentioned “isolation and stress.” But when Emma visited her at home, the reality was far more urgent.

Yasmin had endured years of domestic abuse. Now alone, she faced cancer treatment with no family, no transport, and a home that lacked even the basics. Her heating had become unaffordable, her house was up for sale, and she was scared—of the illness, of the uncertainty, and of going through it all on her own.

Emma acted immediately. She referred Yasmin to Adult Social Care for both carers and occupational therapy assessments to support her during treatment. She also helped her apply for grants to cover warm clothing and white goods, and connected her to energy advice schemes so she could stay warm through the winter.

Housing support was arranged, and transport options—like hospital taxis—were explored to make sure Yasmin wouldn’t miss a single appointment. But perhaps most importantly, Emma offered steady, empathetic presence—someone to listen, to guide, and to stand alongside her when she felt most alone.

Now, with essential referrals in place, the next step is tackling Yasmin’s isolation. Without family, finding a community will be vital for her long-term wellbeing.

“I want her to know she’s not alone,” Emma shared. “Even without family, there are people who care and want to help her through this.”

Challenges

The service continues to face increasing demand, with referrals consistently exceeding capacity. Many clients present with complex, interlinked needs — including housing insecurity, financial hardship, social isolation, and low-level mental health difficulties. Navigating fragmented or overstretched community resources can delay support, and the cost-of-living crisis has further reduced available options. Language barriers add another layer of complexity, requiring interpreter services and extending case times. Despite these challenges, the team has remained resilient, ensuring patients receive personalised, trusted, and practical support.

Future Goals

- Develop SP Admin role into a full SPLW
- Improve qualitative and quantitative reporting
- Strengthen community-focused social prescribing
- Tighten case management and quality assurance
- Deliver further training for the SP team
- Explore delivery in new PCNs

» Solihull Lifestyle Service



Solihull Lifestyle Service

The Solihull Lifestyle Service (SLS) remains a cornerstone of prevention and wellbeing support, providing tailored interventions for adults with complex health needs. In 2024–25, the service supported 2,316 clients — well above the 1,900 target — maintaining an 82% enrolment rate and consistently achieving outcomes above national benchmarks.

Clients achieved an average weight loss of 4.4kg, with nearly half reaching ≥5% loss. The in-house Health Empowerment course, piloted in Year 6 and continues into Year 7, was rolled out with North Solihull and Sheldon PCNs, embedding preventative health approaches into education and community settings.

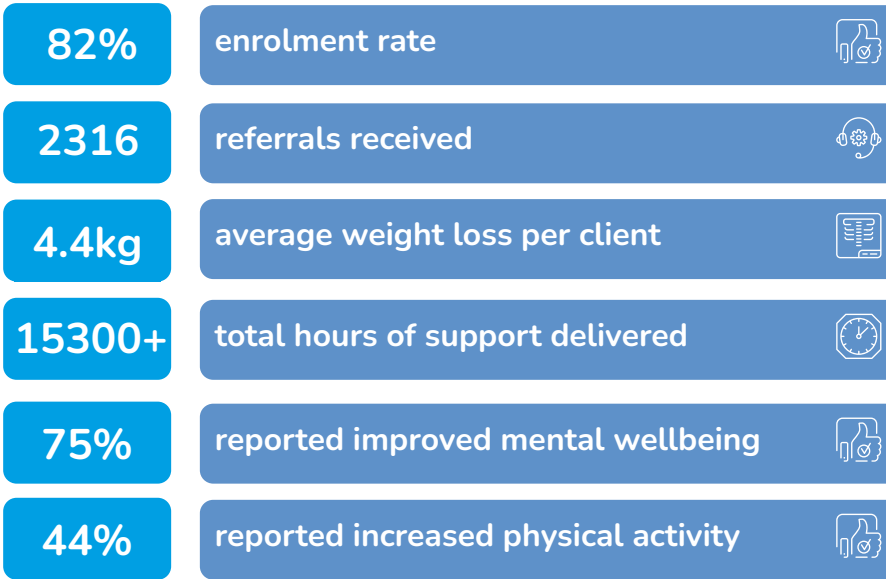
On average, clients received 9 hours of support, equating to more than 15,300 hours of person-centred service. Post-service support has been strengthened, connecting individuals and families to wider community resources, while the expansion of the Health and Wellbeing Coach service has provided additional support for clients experiencing low mental health needs impacting their lifestyle such as stress and anxiety.

Key outcomes show growth compared to last year: more men accessing the service (+11%), a 24% increase in

clients aged 45–54, and rises in post-service improvements in mental wellbeing (+11%) and physical activity (+9%).

Collaboration with Children’s Weight Management and SLS remains a strength, with joint engagement at borough-wide events and community-facing delivery. With 60% of participants living in areas of deprivation, SLS is not only meeting targets but embedding long-term change where it is needed most.

Impact in numbers



» Solihull Lifestyle Service



About SLS?

Gateway Family Services manages the Solihull Lifestyle Service to improve health and wellbeing in Solihull. Working with local organisations, the service offers personalised support based on individual needs. After an initial assessment, clients receive guidance from Community Wellbeing and Behaviour Change Advisors, who provide motivation and practical help to empower them to make healthy lifestyle changes.

Follow:   

The Impact:
Turning Point: Sarah’s Journey to Health and Confidence

There’s a kind of exhaustion that no amount of sleep can cure — one born of trying to manage everything alone, without enough time, support, or breathing room. That’s where Sarah (name changed), a single mum of two, found herself.

At 16 stone, with a BMI of 36 and energy levels at an all-time low, Sarah was overwhelmed. Feeding her children well on a limited income felt impossible. Quick-fix meals left her drained with guilt, and every day was a whirlwind of stress, fatigue, and worry.

That changed when a conversation at her GP surgery led to a referral to Solihull Lifestyle Service. There, she met Advisor Tina — someone who listened without judgement and helped her feel seen.

Together, they built a plan tailored to Sarah’s life.

She enrolled in a 12-week weight management programme and joined “Cooking on a Budget” — a hands-on course that gave her the confidence to prepare healthy, affordable meals her children would actually eat.

In three months, Sarah lost 1 stone and 8 pounds. But more importantly, she gained energy, confidence, and a renewed sense of control. Mealtimes became moments of connection, not stress. Her children even started helping in the kitchen.

Today, Sarah plans meals, shops smarter, and embraces a lifestyle that’s healthier and more sustainable — all without fads or gimmicks. “It’s been life-changing,” she reflects. And it all began with someone taking the time to listen.

Challenges

The imminent commissioning and tendering process creates uncertainty for the future of the service. While SLS has built a trusted reputation and proven outcomes, competition from larger providers focus on core activities poses a challenge in an open bidding environment. This external uncertainty has the potential to affect Wellbeing Advisors’ morale, as the team works hard to sustain quality and consistency while preparing for potential service changes.

Future Goals

- Expand the Health Empowerment programme with a focus on tackling health inequalities
- Strengthen post-service pathways with structured follow-up across all services (HWC & SLS)
- Pilot multi-agency delivery models for borough-wide events to boost coordination and efficiency
- Explore digital engagement to improve accessibility and outcome tracking



The Active Travel Social Prescribing (ATSP) programme launched with an ambitious goal: to embed walking and cycling as everyday, accessible options for improving physical and mental health. Over the past year, the service has made strong strides in both health engagement and community partnership — despite limited staffing and short-term contracts.

ATSP focused on three key fronts: equipping health professionals with the knowledge and tools to promote active travel, building a strong network of local providers, and offering real-world experiences to residents who may not otherwise access active transport. A total of 57 frontline health practitioners were trained to champion active travel in their everyday practice, while 37 local walking and cycling providers were onboarded to ensure a diverse offer across Solihull.

Community outreach included 10 “Come and Try” events, giving residents a chance to explore walking or cycling activities in supportive, low-pressure environments. Through these efforts, the programme engaged 88 adult participants directly

and generated 305 referrals into local provision — well beyond expectations. A new full-time Health Navigator was recruited to coordinate this work and offer tailored support.

Digital engagement also helped raise awareness, with 1,251 ad clicks and 670 unique webpage views, showing strong interest in local travel options. The programme exceeded all of its core targets and established a solid foundation for embedding active travel in future wellbeing initiatives.



About ATSP?

The ATSP promotes active travel, such as walking and cycling, to reduce health inequalities and encourage healthier lifestyles. By partnering with the transport and healthcare sectors, we support individuals improve their physical and mental health. GPs and healthcare professionals can refer patients to non-clinical support, integrating walking and cycling into social prescribing activities to enhance overall wellbeing.

The Impact: Walking Towards Connection: Harold’s Quiet Step Forward

For Harold West (name changed), walking has always been more than just exercise — it’s been a way to feel grounded. After losing his wife just over a year ago, the long walks he once enjoyed together became solitary rituals. He would still visit her grave, shop on foot, and take in the familiar sights, but loneliness had begun to settle in.

Despite living with a musculoskeletal condition, Harold remained active, but missed companionship. When Active Travel Navigator Scott Baldwin met him at a local church’s mild exercise session, a simple conversation sparked something new.

“I mentioned I love walking,” Harold shared, “and I was curious about doing it with others again.” Scott invited Harold to a “Try It & See” event later that month — a community walking session aimed at bringing people together. Harold joined in, met fellow walkers, and found joy in both the fresh air

and friendly chatter. It reminded him of everything he’d missed.

Afterwards, Scott connected Harold with a local walking group and encouraged him to meet their walk leader. Harold now plans to join them regularly — not just to stretch his legs, but to stretch back into community life.

“Just walking with others gave me a lift I didn’t realise I needed,” Harold said, smiling. This quiet step forward has sparked a healthy change — one of renewed confidence, connection, and a future filled with shared paths and conversation.

Challenges

Despite its success, ATSP operated with only one Health Navigator on a short-term contract, which limited capacity and long-term planning. A key operational challenge was the ability to track referrals through to participation and a recognised need to streamline the referral process, ensuring health professionals can refer quickly and accurately. We forged a new and lasting relationship with WMCA on this contract which will lead to new work opportunities, which will only strengthen the impact we can have in supporting local people to lead healthier and happier lives.



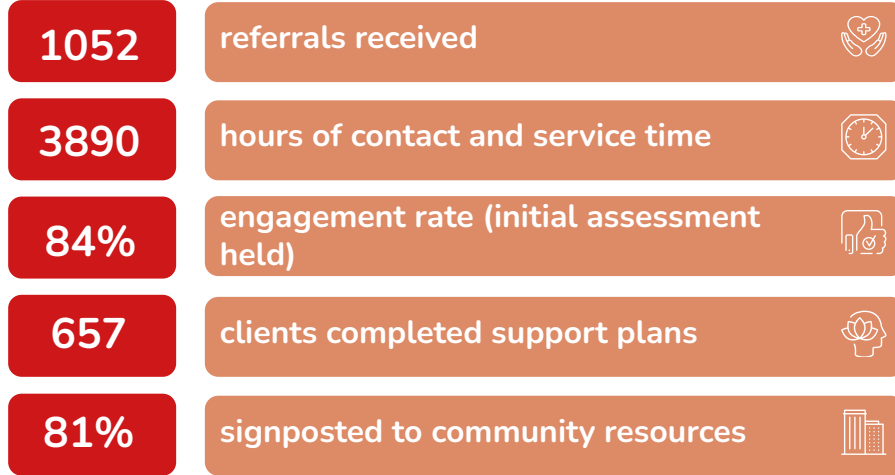
Operating from North Solihull PCN (and more recently expanded across Sheldon PCN) our Health and Wellbeing Coaching Service has had a strong first year, helping clients set and work toward personalised goals for their physical and emotional wellbeing. The service operates as part of a holistic model, offering one-to one coaching, structured goal-setting, and community signposting for people with long-term conditions, mental health challenges, or low confidence in navigating their own health and wellbeing.

In Year 1, the service received 1,052 referrals, with an impressive 84% engagement rate — far surpassing the original 70% target. Clients took part in a full initial assessment and were supported in reaching their goals by our highly trained Coaches. We saw 657 patients complete and sign off their personalised support plans and patient journeys were tracked closely, with 100% of plans including wellbeing goals, and 100% of referrers receiving timely progress updates.

Over 81% of clients were signposted to local community resources, exceeding expectations and highlighting the team’s integration with wider wellbeing services.

As the service matures, we are now looking to continue this success in supporting patients across North Solihull with Health and Wellbeing Coaching. We will look to continue to strengthen the services ability to reduce GP appointment time by our approach of clear and effective management and responsive and robust recording and coaching techniques that support patient personalised care journeys.

Impact in numbers



About Coaches?

Health and Wellbeing Coaches are trained in behaviour change techniques, they work with both physical and mental health. They can help you to manage everyday mental health issues like stress, worries, feeling down or being overwhelmed. They offer encouragement and support, in achieving your goals.

The Impact: A New Step Forward: Colin’s Quiet Transformation

At 54, Colin (name changed) from Chelmsley Wood had settled into a routine that revolved around limitation. A longstanding knee injury had quietly shaped his world — not just physically, but mentally. Walks became drives, activities were avoided, and low mood settled in like a permanent companion.

Initially unsure about what Health and Wellbeing Coaching could offer, Colin attended his first session with Gateway Family Services with quiet scepticism. What followed was a subtle but significant shift.

Together with his coach, Colin started small: a few extra steps each day. No pressure, no dramatic fitness plan—just gentle encouragement and achievable goals. Bit by bit, walking became normal again. Nutrition came next, and with support, Colin began incorporating more fruit and veg into his meals.

Over five sessions, Colin’s outlook changed. What once felt impossible—like hitting 10,000 steps—became part of his daily rhythm. With movement came momentum, and with that, a lift in mood and energy.

The knee injury didn’t disappear, but the narrative around it changed. It was no longer a reason to withdraw—it became something to manage, not fear.

Today, Colin moves more, eats better, and approaches life with optimism. His story is proof that big changes don’t always start with fanfare. Sometimes, they begin with a single step—and the belief that change is possible.

Challenges

As the Service grows we will support this by introducing live case tracking and data accuracy, alongside gathering client feedback and reducing admin burdens that cut into coaching time. Increasingly complex referrals will mean the continued need for protected time for training and supervision to maintain quality. We will support and maintain DNA rates with appointment reminders offering both flexibility and consistency. We will utilise digital channels to streamline our processes to ensure administration tasks are managed effectively.

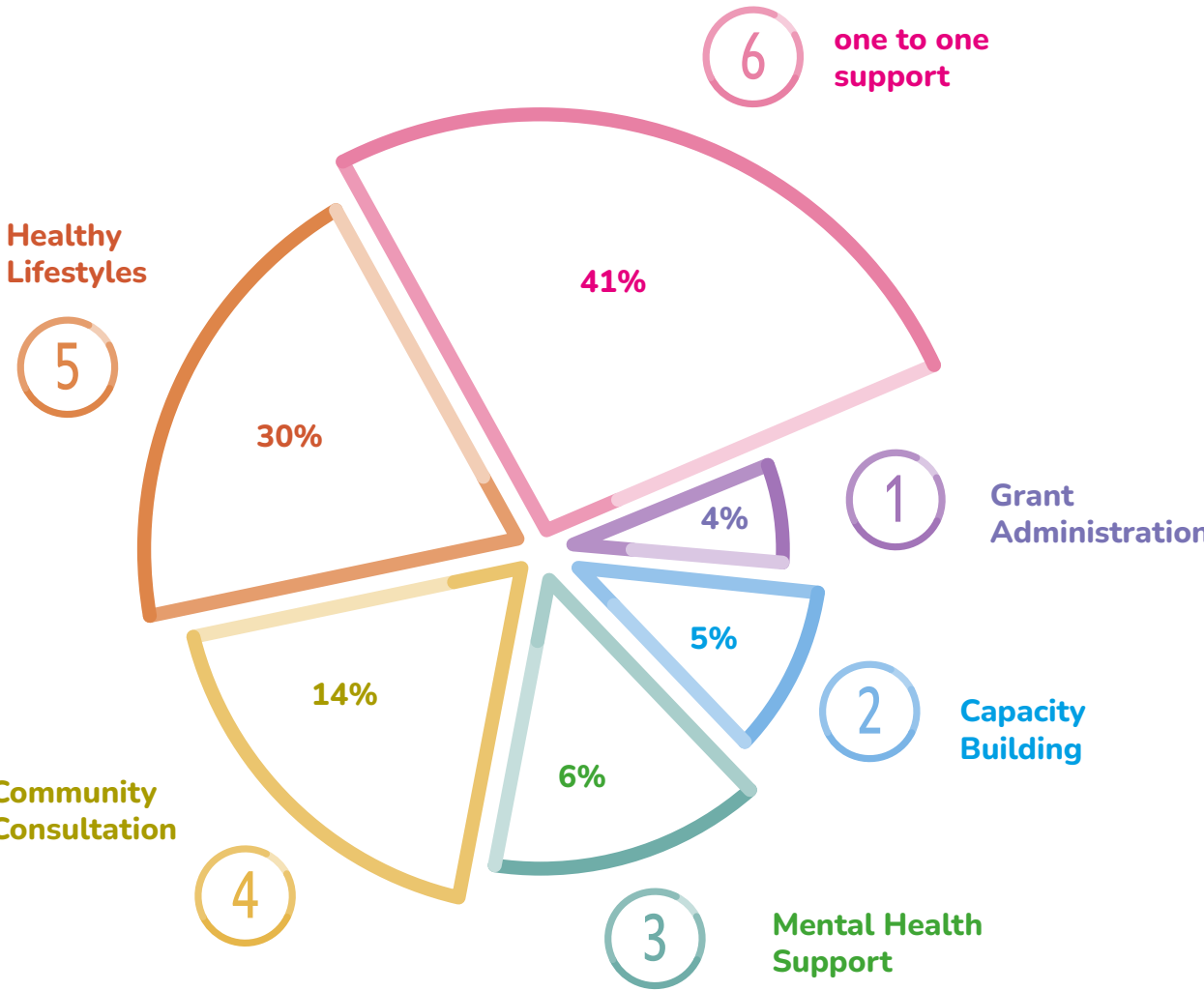
Future Goals

- Reduce DNA rates with better appointment reminders and more flexible/digital scheduling.
- Strengthen service quality through improved live case tracking, client feedback, and consistent quality monitoring.
- Support staff and systems by investing in development, protecting coaching time, and using digital tools to cut admin.
- Enhance client pathways with a triage system for complex referrals, group sessions for shared needs, and clear referral criteria.

Finance

How We Invested in Impact

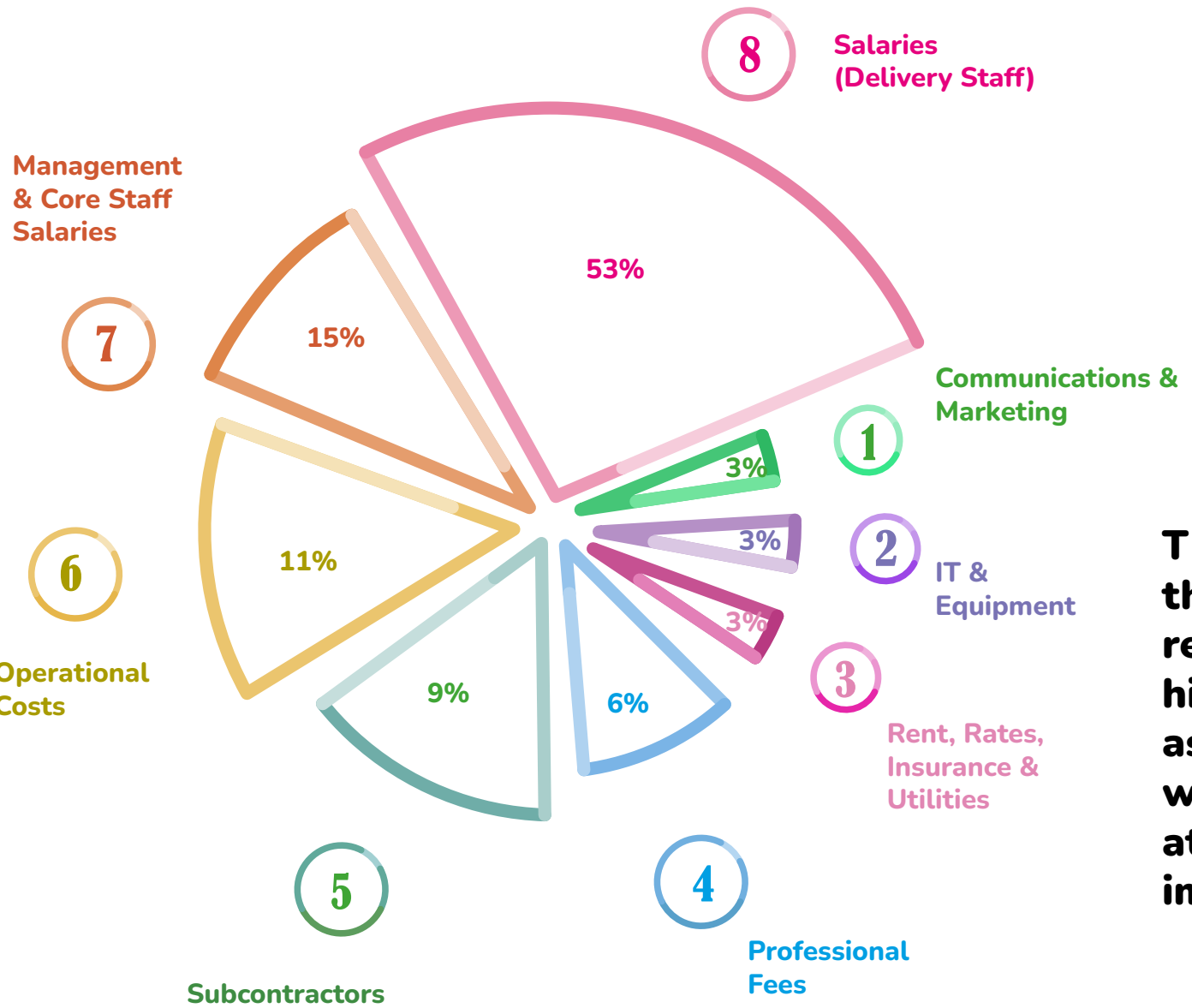
Every pound we receive is used with purpose: to strengthen communities, improve wellbeing, and provide direct support where it matters most. This breakdown shows how Gateway Family Services allocated its funding across key areas of work in 2024–25, ensuring resources are focused on people, not processes.



These figures reflect our commitment to frontline delivery, local voice, and holistic wellbeing — with the majority of our resources directed toward person-centred support and healthy lifestyle programmes.

How It Was Spent

This year, Gateway Family Services continued to invest funding where it makes the most difference — supporting people directly through tailored, person-centred services. The chart below shows how our funding was allocated across different areas of work.



These costs reflect the infrastructure required to maintain high-quality delivery, as well as the skilled workforce that sits at the heart of our impact.

Governance & Leadership

Gateway Family Services is proud to be guided by a proactive and committed Board of Directors, who provide strategic oversight, financial accountability, and a strong values-led vision for our work. This year, the Board played a vital role in ensuring the organisation remained resilient, people-focused, and forward-thinking during a period of significant growth and transition.



Financial Stewardship and Use of Reserves

One of the Board’s core responsibilities is to ensure Gateway’s long-term financial health. This year, the Board reviewed and updated our Reserves Policy, agreeing to increase restricted reserves to cover six months of operating costs. This decision was made in response to the expansion of services, a growing workforce, and the move to our new Harborne office — a more accessible and welcoming space, but one that brings with it new financial commitments.

The Board also oversaw how surplus funding would be utilised, ensuring that additional resources supported the organisation’s greatest assets — our staff and service users. They approved dedicated funds for:

- Staff wellbeing, beyond existing offers such as EAP, GP access, and counselling
- Staff training and development, supporting both personal growth and service improvement
- Gateway Grants, an annual ‘funding pot’ that enables staff to apply for funds to meet specific client needs.

To date, over £2,500 has supported essential items such as mobility equipment, GP documentation fees, relocation costs, and school travel. In addition, the Board agreed to fund two new areas of service development:

1. A Vaping Prevention Programme for young people to support and mitigate a worrying emerging trend amongst our young people, even impacting on primary school children.
2. A Volunteer Programme that will both support core services and help participants build skills for future employment

Strategic Planning

Over the past year, the Board has worked closely with the Senior Management Team to develop Gateway’s new Strategy on a Page — a live strategic framework that clearly outlines the organisation’s direction, values, and priorities. This document guides our services, supports internal planning, and connects staff roles to our broader organisational goals.



Word from our Board Chair

Since stepping into the role of Chair, I have been inspired by the dedication, expertise, and compassion that runs through both the Board and the wider organisation. It has been a privilege to work alongside such a committed group of trustees who not only safeguard the financial stability of Gateway Family Services, but also ensure our decisions are rooted in our values and in the real needs of the people we serve.

Over the past year, the Board has played a pivotal role in strengthening our reserves position, directing surplus funds into tangible benefits for both staff and service users, and supporting new initiatives that respond to emerging community needs. I am particularly proud of the way we have championed staff wellbeing, training, and development, as well as creating new opportunities to provide direct support to those who need it most.

Looking ahead, the Board’s focus will be on continuing to strengthen our governance, ensuring our Strategy

Board Development and Leadership

The last 12 months have seen positive changes in the makeup of our Board. Several new members have joined, bringing fresh perspectives and experience. Among them is **Liz Crutchley**, who has taken on the role of Chair. Liz has already made a substantial impact, supporting the CEO’s strategic development, helping broker new networking opportunities, and contributing to the long-term vision of the organisation. Another new Board appointment brings additional expertise to our Children and Families work, helping further shape our early years and parenting support offer.

on a Page remains a living document that drives meaningful action, and embedding our Zero Emissions plan into all areas of delivery. We will also continue to invest in Board development, making sure we have the skills, perspectives, and strategic foresight needed to navigate future challenges and opportunities.

It has been an exciting and rewarding start as Chair, and I look forward to building on the progress we have made together.

Looking Ahead: Environmental Responsibility

As part of our future focus, Gateway is working towards a **Zero Emissions Plan** in alignment with commissioner and partner priorities. The Board has reviewed and approved this plan and will oversee its rollout, working closely with staff and stakeholders to embed sustainable practices across the organisation.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Partnership working is central to Gateway’s approach, recognising that no single organisation can address all community needs alone. Over the past year, we’ve strengthened collaborations with local authorities, NHS trusts, voluntary organisations, faith communities, and grassroots groups across Birmingham and Solihull. Our partnerships extend beyond referrals — we co-design events, establish seamless pathways, contribute to strategic boards, and pilot innovative care models. These collaborations amplify our collective impact, enabling holistic support that reduces duplication and ensures no one falls through gaps. The result is stronger, more accessible communities where residents access the right support, from the right organisation, at the right time.

Let’s hear what our partners say about us!



Over the past year, Gateway Family Services have been a highly proactive and valued partner to our Primary Care Network Management Team at SDS. They have consistently demonstrated a willingness not only to seize and act on new opportunities, but also to work collaboratively with us to ensure those opportunities deliver real benefit to our practices and the communities we serve.

A particular strength has been their commitment to improving communication across the system, through building stronger links between Gateway, PCN management teams and individual practices. This has created clearer pathways, more responsive working, and ultimately better support for patients.

Gateway’s proactive and collaborative approach has made them a trusted partner for our networks, and we greatly value their continued contribution to integrated, person-centred care across the region.

Tom O’Sullivan,
SDSmyhealthcare
Head of PCNs and Partnerships

“Working in partnership with Gateways Family Services has been an incredibly rewarding experience. They are genuinely enthusiastic about building strong relationships with local organisations and are proactive in identifying opportunities that strengthen our project’s success. Their approach strikes the perfect balance by offering regular, thoughtful support while also respecting the importance of autonomy.

What truly stands out is their passion and commitment to empowering people with learning disabilities to take an active role in their own end-of-life planning. This dedication creates a partnership that feels not only collaborative but also deeply meaningful and respectful.

Thank you Gateway Services”.

Suzanne McArthur,
Founder and Director
Evolve & Flourish



Working with Gateway Family Services has been an incredibly enriching experience. As a trusted and well-respected partner, they played a key role in helping us shape our Inclusive Communities Approach. Their deep-rooted connection with local residents and their holistic methods of support truly embodies what makes the voluntary and community sector so impactful in the West Midlands. Throughout our collaboration, Gateway demonstrated exceptional professionalism and generosity, sharing their extensive knowledge and insight into both the strengths and challenges facing community work. We learned a great deal from their expertise, and their commitment to improving lives continues to inspire us.

Helen Frost,
Inclusive Communities Strategic Lead
(CWGLEF) WMCA)

North Solihull Primary Care Network (NSPCN) are proud to work in close partnership with Gateway Family Services as our trusted provider of both Social Prescribers and Health and Wellbeing Coaches. Their team consistently delivers a person-centred, community-focused approach that aligns with our priorities for integrated care and prevention. A key strength of this partnership is the provision of support to help individuals manage stress, anxiety, and social isolation before these issues escalate further. By embedding into local Primary Care Networks and working collaboratively across services, they have enhanced the support available to residents - particularly those facing complex social and health challenges - playing a crucial role in reducing health inequalities across North Solihull.

Kate Burke,
Commissioner
NSPCN

Marketing & Promotion

In 2024–25, Gateway Family Services made bold strides in how we communicate, promote services, and connect with our audiences. At the heart of this was our second website relaunch in two years — this time focused on user experience, navigation, accessibility, and mobile responsiveness. More than a cosmetic update, the site now features dynamic layouts, embedded blogs, and integrated service information, helping people find what they need quickly and intuitively.

We also strengthened our marketing infrastructure. A new Marketing and Event Calendar now helps service teams coordinate key dates, content, and campaigns — improving visibility for local and national initiatives and making collaboration between services and the communications team smoother.

Content formats have been diversified too, with more QR codes on print materials, AI visuals for case stories, and trials of animated digital posters and video banners. These updates make materials more eye-catching and safe to share while protecting client identity.

Email marketing has grown with three tailored newsletters: Early Help Monthly, the Social Prescribing Monthly Update for PCNs, and the ENNS Quarterly Newsletter. Each has been well received by professionals and partners, offering timely service updates and events.

Social media remains central to outreach. Gateway now manages 22 active accounts, with reduced focus on Twitter but strong growth across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Campaigns like Black Maternal Health Week and Social Prescribing Day boosted engagement and helped

attract new followers.





Together, these efforts have made Gateway more visible, user-friendly, and connected than ever.

Website Performance			
Metric	This Year	Last Year	%change
Total visits	25,452	2,918	↑ 772%
New users	18,388	1,928	↑ 854%
Returning users	2,436	442	↑ 451%
Page views	39,644	4,921	↑ 705%
Direct traffic	13,765	1,311	↑ 947%
Search traffic	9,617	1,434	↑ 571%
Organic social visits	404	50	↑ 708%

 **What this means:**

We’ve dramatically increased our digital presence — with over 25,000 visits and 18,000 new users. Most users now find us directly or via Google, showing greater brand recognition and stronger SEO. Returning users also jumped, indicating improved loyalty and relevance.

Social Media Highlights(GFS main accounts)

Channel	Reach	Visits	Follower Growth
 Facebook	12,302 (↑ 87.9%)	3,103 (↑ 81.3%)	+56 (↑ 30.2%)
 Instagram	217 (↑ 26.9%)	119 (↓ 17.9%)	+23 (↑ 40.2%)
 LinkedIn	2,198 impressions	427 total followers	+26 (↑ 6.5%)
Top Performace page	Reach	Visits	Follower Growth
 ENNS	8,920 (↑ 88.4%)	3,147 (↑ 66.9%)	+74 (↑ 9.8%)
 SLS	13,783 (↑ 49.1%)	618 (↑ 81.2%)	+25 (↑ 58.2%)





 **What this means:**

We’ve increased our visibility across most platforms — particularly Facebook and LinkedIn — while continuing to reduce reliance on Twitter/X due to its negative shift in tone. Service-specific accounts also saw strong growth, with ENNS and SLS standing out in performance.

Challenges

With a relatively small marketing team, delivering consistent and creative content across 22 channels can be demanding. Public understanding of Community Interest Companies (CICs) also remains low, creating an ongoing challenge in establishing brand trust compared to more traditional charities. While our website performance has improved, our average search ranking still sits around page two of Google — making it harder to stand out in a competitive space. Targeting and reaching the right audiences, especially for newer services, also remains a priority.

Google Search Console Insight

	6,740 total clicks across indexed pages
	396,834 impressions
	Average Google ranking: 18 (Page 2)
	Click-through rate (CTR): 1.7%

 **What this means:**

More people are seeing and clicking through to our site, especially through search engines. We’ve improved discoverability — but we aim to push into top 10 search results to compete with larger organisations and increase trust.

Future Plan

- Launch Gateway’s new internal Intranet to boost staff communication
- Introduce more automated tools to support reporting, translation, and design
- Increase the volume and frequency of social media and blog content
- Strengthen our brand presence as a leading CIC in the West Midlands

