

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-29

MARCH 2026

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM
V01



Scope

This strategic plan sets out priorities for CW+ over a three-year period. It will be underpinned by a series of team-specific operational plans that outline the details of implementation and provide KPIs for evaluation.

This plan has been developed in consultation with the Senior Management Team (SMT), CW+ staff, Foundation Trust and Board of Trustees. Implementation of the plan, and the underpinning operational plans, will be the responsibility of SMT, with regular progress reports against key performance indicators (KPIs) provided to the Board of Trustees.

Vision and mission

CW+ is the official charity of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Our vision is to enable every patient to receive outstanding care, in our Trust's community of more than 1.5 million people and beyond.

Our mission is to work with our Trust to create world-class facilities, drive innovation and research, and enhance patient and staff wellbeing. Using our expertise in partnership building, arts in health and healthcare innovation, we develop creative solutions to support an evolving NHS.

Values

Our values were defined collectively by the CW+ staff team and will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain embedded in everything we do.

Community-focused – we put people at the heart of everything we do.

Respectful of differences – we embrace diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Impact-driven – we learn, we share, we grow.

Collaborative – we are stronger when we work together.



Executive summary

When CW+ published its last strategy in 2023, the world was emerging from a global pandemic. Energised by the remarkable support for its Adult and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit campaigns, the charity launched an ambitious programme of work, including its largest fundraising appeal to date – Thirty at Thirty.

Over the three years that followed, the external landscape evolved considerably, with a change of government, the announced closure of NHS England and structural reforms across the NHS. Internally, CW+ developed its in-house expertise across healthcare innovation, design and environment, fundraising, communications, major projects, grant-making, finance and impact evaluation. Against this backdrop, and with the continued support of our loyal community of donors, we have made significant progress against the aims set out in the 2023-26 strategy.

Under our first strategic theme – **creating world-class facilities** – we played a central role in designing and delivering new clinical spaces. At Chelsea and Westminster, the Day Surgery Unit (formerly the Treatment Centre) has increased capacity by 30%, enabling up to 2,000 more patients to be treated each year. What was once a cramped, poorly designed area has become a bright, efficient and welcoming environment. The project also required relocating the Adult Therapy Department, where CW+ provided a suite of enhancements to improve patient and staff experience.

Also at Chelsea, we opened the Reuben Young People’s Centre, a major milestone for our Best For You programme. The redesigned space is now calm, therapeutic, more functional, and tailored to the needs of young people admitted for a wide range of reasons. At West Middlesex, work continues on the Diagnostic, Treatment and Education Centre, due to open in autumn 2026. CW+ enhancements to this flagship facility will include scanners, specialist chemotherapy and dialysis chairs, commissioned artwork and a therapeutic garden terrace.

Our second theme – **driving innovation and research** – included the expansion of the CW Innovation programme, run jointly with our Trust. In 2024, the programme marked its fifth anniversary with a major showcase event and the opening of the CW Innovation Hub at Chelsea. CW Innovation continues to embed a culture of innovation across the Trust through ward popups, showcases, pilots and partnerships.

Theme two also included the digital element of Best For You. In the past three years, the Best For You website has welcomed more than 200,000 users, our digital content has won awards and been screened at Picadilly Circus, and community partnerships have grown to include YouTube, the Aalborg region of Denmark and Advantage Mentoring.



The third theme – **enhancing patient and staff experience** – has delivered significant impact. Our Arts for All programme now provides creative activities for more than 20,000 patients each year, while the CW+ Studio hosts a year-round programme for the wider community. The CW+ MediCinema at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital continues to offer respite, distraction and joy to over 2,500 visitors annually. Our Grants programme, which distributes £750,000 each year to support patient care and staff wellbeing, has been reviewed, refreshed and expanded, with the number of staff supported increasing year on year.

Our final theme – **supporting our community, region and the national care agenda** – reflected our ambition to share learning and expertise across the NHS. During this period, our Neonatal Palliative Care (NNPC) programme became embedded as business as usual, with 75% of regions in England trained including, last year, 576 healthcare professionals. The NNPC Team now contributes to over 30 national pieces of work or groups.

Meanwhile, in partnership with NHS England and NHS Charities Together, we successfully launched Volunteering for Health. This £10m national programme funds 15 partnerships across the country, breaking down barriers to volunteering, testing new models and developing best practice for wider adoption. This work embodies the charity's ability to convene partners and develop innovative solutions for system-wide challenges.

Three years on, CW+ has achieved a huge amount and is operating in a very different landscape. Health needs continue to evolve, and the NHS is still undergoing major change while tackling backlogs and staffing pressures. At the same time, our charity has grown in size and delivery capacity, and shifts in philanthropic giving have influenced what we can fund, who supports us and how.

In this changing environment, and while NHS strategy is being determined, we will work closely with our Trust's leadership team to identify emerging priorities and shape projects that deliver meaningful impact for patients and staff. More widely within our region, and as the North West London Acute Provider Group develops, we will collaborate with partner charities to increase our collective impact.

Our three strategic themes are deliberately broad. In each we have focused on two key questions: where can we use our unique strengths to add the most value, and how can we best support the Trust in responding to emerging needs in ways that may benefit communities beyond our own? With this clarity of purpose, we are confident in delivering our ambitions for 2026-29.



Theme 1: Accelerating next-generation healthcare

Patients are at the heart of what we do, and innovation, technology and research play vital roles in ensuring that our hospitals continually improve clinical outcomes and evolve in step with a challenging external landscape. We will continue to build on the successes of our CW Innovation programme, leading the way in the NHS and highlighting our Trust as a global centre of excellence. Alongside this, we will support our Trust in its world-leading work to research, treat and prevent infectious diseases.

Priority 1 – Infectious diseases

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the critical importance of being able to develop vaccines and treatments at speed, and clinical research teams at Chelsea and Westminster played an essential role in the national response. Building on this success, the Trust strengthened its reputation as a leader in HIV and infectious disease research and is now poised to expand its research capability further.

CW+ will play a central role in supporting this growth. Working closely with Trust colleagues and external partners, we will help drive the next phase of development by investing in the infrastructure, talent and partnerships needed to accelerate research across Chelsea and Westminster and West Middlesex hospitals. A major priority will be raising funds to create a new Clinical Research Facility at Chelsea and Westminster and increase clinical research capacity across both sites. This expanded infrastructure will enable larger and more complex studies, attract high-calibre clinical academics, and position the Trust competitively in the national research landscape.

Alongside capital investment, we will support the Trust's Research and Development strategy through targeted grants and initiatives that fund infrastructure to nurture the next generation of clinician-researchers. By creating opportunities for staff to develop as academics, and by helping attract leading research talent from the UK and abroad, we will strengthen the Trust's capacity to deliver high-quality, impactful studies.

Building on our previous work, we will continue to support the advancement of HIV prevention and research, growing global training and education programmes, and developing partnerships across HIV, sexual health and gender services. Through fundraising and strategic project management, the charity aims to secure circa £500,000 annually and help drive progress toward zero new infections in London by 2030.

Together, these efforts will help ensure that the Trust continues to grow as a centre of research excellence – one that responds to global health challenges, accelerates discovery, and improves outcomes for the diverse communities it serves.



Priority 2 – CW Innovation

CW Innovation, jointly led by CW+ and the Trust, has embedded a model where innovation is driven from within, supporting staff-driven innovation and transforming care delivery across the organisation. Rooted in service transformation, the programme combines deep insight into clinical and operational challenges with strong staff engagement, careful selection of enabling technologies, and partnerships that bring best-in-class solutions into the Trust.

The programme's infrastructure includes the CW Innovation Hub, the CW Innovation Fellowship, and access to specialist staff. A comprehensive support ecosystem underpins delivery through governance frameworks, training, funding pathways and strong networks. The portfolio continues to grow, encompassing impactful projects such as AI-assisted teledermatology, connected and technology-driven systems that manage a patient's entire surgical journey, and other data-driven initiatives. Alongside this, an active engagement programme featuring ward popups, showcases and collaborative events helps foster creativity and motivation among staff.

CW Innovation's work has established the Trust as a national leader in digitally enabled transformation, with several initiatives now scaled across North West London ICB. Over the next three years, the programme will build on this success while adapting to evolving organisational priorities. Key developments will include the creation of a formal Innovation Assessment Board and the appointment of a Clinical Director for Innovation to strengthen leadership and governance. Capacity will grow through delivery of a fifth cohort of Innovation Fellows and development of the case for an additional Innovation Associate. Engagement activity – including ward popups and industry showcases – will remain central to sustaining a culture of innovation.

As external funding reduces and technology markets shift, engagement will increasingly focus on larger strategic partners – such as GE Healthcare, Medtronic and L'Oréal – and collaboration across the acute provider collaborative to co-develop shared solutions. Meanwhile, the Trust's emphasis is shifting from importing technology to building solutions using existing system-wide platforms including the Federated Data Platform, Oracle Health (Cerner), Isla and DrDoctor. As a result, fewer but more strategically significant projects will be initiated. The programme will prioritise platform-based innovation, with a strong focus on artificial intelligence such as voice AI, radiology imaging and agentic AI, alongside remote monitoring through wearables and more advanced use of data for prediction, risk stratification and early intervention.



Theme 2: Improving patient and staff experience

In addition to helping our Trust stay at the forefront of next-generation healthcare, our work will focus on a holistic approach to wellbeing for patients, their relatives, and staff. Drawing on a growing evidence base, we will prioritise the most effective means of ensuring that everyone's experience of the hospital environment is as positive as it can be. Alongside this, our Grants programme will support Trust staff to develop and deliver projects that improve patient care, enhance their own wellbeing and professional growth, and drive innovation across the Trust.

Priority 1 – Arts for All

Over the next three years, Arts for All will strengthen the role of creative health across the Trust, supporting the NHS 10-Year Plan's priorities to shift care from hospital to community, focus on prevention and wellbeing, and deliver more personalised, integrated services. Working in partnership with clinical teams, artists, community organisations and local authorities, we will embed creativity within care pathways to improve patient and staff experience, tackle health inequalities and enhance population health outcomes.

In 2026, the CW+ Studio marks five years of delivery – this milestone will be a key opportunity to consolidate learning and position the CW+ Studio as a central platform for delivering these ambitions through community-connected creative health practice. It is our aim to:

- Expand participation and access by increasing creative engagement across wards, outpatient settings and neighbourhood spaces. We will do this through defined artist residencies, performances and co-designed programmes that are targeted to key health outcomes.
- Bridge hospital and community by developing the CW+ Studio as a leading example of connection between the two, expanding the reach to support the NHS 10-Year Plan and its focus on community support. We will also enhance the CW+ MediCinema's offer through condition-focused wellbeing initiatives and sustain and expand Art Therapy as a core component of integrated, holistic care.
- Continue to use and improve innovative methods of arts in health delivery, and embed robust evaluation and research to evidence impact and support prevention, early intervention and personalised care through participatory activities.



Priority 2 – Design and Environment

Over the next three years, CW+ will continue investing in high-quality healthcare environments that support the wellbeing of patients, staff and visitors. Our focus will be on delivering a strong programme of design projects across our sites, guided by our Design Standards and driven by sustainability, comfort and long-term value.

Sustainability will remain central to our work. We will partner with innovators to improve air quality, lighting, sound and biophilic elements across clinical spaces. Our goal is to create environments that reduce stress, aid recovery and feel welcoming for everyone. We will publish findings from our Air Quality Study and work with architectural partners to deepen analysis, helping establish evidence-based standards for improving indoor air quality.

We will expand our approach to site-specific commissions, developing visual environments that support wayfinding, create a strong sense of place and reflect our communities. Working with gallery partners and artists, we will commission new works and continue to involve creatives early in the design process through programmes such as Drawn in Residence. We will also develop the CW+ collection to ensure our curation and commissioning work continues to evolve across all sites.

We will strengthen our partnership with the Royal College of Art to grow the RELAX Digital programme, exploring opportunities to expand into new digital art forms, including AI and VR. We will seek collaborations with specialists and artists in this field and curate the existing RELAX catalogue to make it easier for other NHS trusts to use throughout England.

The Arts Programme for the new Diagnostic, Treatment and Education Centre at West Middlesex will deliver a coordinated series of major commissions, departmental artworks, exhibitions and digital installations throughout the building. All work will be shaped through meaningful staff and patient input to ensure it reflects the identities and needs of the people who use the Centre.

Building on the success of recent site-specific projects and the West Middlesex collection refresh, the programme will embed high-quality, responsive artworks that strengthen the hospital's growing arts identity. Our ambition is to position the Centre as a sector-leading example of best practice – rooted in collaboration, strong community and organisational partnerships, long-term Trust support, and a clear model for future arts activity across the site.



Priority 3 – Grants

We aim to deliver an accessible and wide-ranging Grants programme that strengthens patient care and supports the wellbeing, recruitment and retention of staff. Over the next three years, our refreshed strategy will sharpen our focus on innovation, collaboration and measurable impact across the Trust.

We will lower the top-tier award from £50,000 to £25,000. This shift will allow us to distribute funds more widely and direct support to a broader range of high-priority initiatives. These include digital innovation projects, improvements to patient experience, and opportunities for staff learning and professional development.

Strong governance will underpin the programme. Key Trust leadership involvement in the endorsement process will help ensure grants align closely with Trust priorities, and that funding delivers maximum benefit for patients and staff.

Following the closure of the Westminster Medical School Research Trust charity, we will review priorities for research funding to ensure support continues in areas of greatest need.

To maximise the reach of our funding, we will maintain targeted funding themes through special calls. These will include partnerships with CW Innovation on digital-focused calls, supporting new technology solutions within clinical services. We will also prioritise the effective use of restricted funds held for specific departments, such as radiology and haematology, ensuring these resources are invested in projects that directly benefit those specialties.

Evaluation will continue to play a central role. We will assess the impact of all grants above £2,000 and introduce a new evaluation tool for smaller grants, capturing consistent feedback and evidence of outcomes. These reports will be fully integrated into our Salesforce grants platform, enabling us to track impact over time and produce clear, accessible reporting for teams, senior leaders and supporters.

Across all priorities, our goal is to ensure the Grants programme remains open, responsive and strongly aligned with the needs of our hospital community – empowering staff, improving patient experience and driving forward meaningful innovation.



Theme 3: Supporting the regional, national and international care agenda

In the past three years, CW+ has responded to the growing need to collaborate and share learning and best practice within the NHS, both regionally and nationally. Our Neonatal Palliative Care and Volunteering for Health programmes have provided invaluable learning and insight in this area. As they come to their natural ends during the coming strategy period, we will be developing that knowledge to benefit communities beyond the immediate geography of our Trust, continuing to add value, expertise and leadership to our core local programmes.

Priority 1 – Best For You

Since 2020, Best For You has established a strong brand and reputation as a leading force in improving young people's mental health. Developed in partnership and shaped directly by the communities it serves, the programme has become a recognised driver of new models of care and innovation across the NHS and beyond. In its first phase, Best For You introduced several national firsts, including care models now embedded in routine NHS practice, the creation of purpose-designed therapeutic environments for young people, and a digital offer accessed more than 240,000 times. Together, these achievements have helped young people navigate crises, access support earlier, and feel more connected to services designed with their needs in mind.

As we enter our next strategic phase, we will continue to grow and strengthen the programme so that it reaches even more young people, their families, carers, and the health and care professionals who support them. This includes developing a wider suite of support tools, resources and evidence-based materials that can be easily used and adapted by both existing and new partners across the country. Central to every aspect of Best For You will be our commitment to placing young people at the heart of the programme. This coproduction model has always been Best For You's strength, and it will remain fundamental as the programme expands its national reach.

- We will develop the UK's leading digital platform for youth mental health, building on our existing offer and expanding its reach to support 500,000 young people by 2029. This will be supported by significant growth in social media engagement, ensuring that we reach an ever-widening group of young people.
- By 2029, we aim to reach every state secondary school in north-west London, offering resources in formats that meet their needs – whether digital, in person or hybrid. This will help equip teachers and school communities to support mental health more confidently and consistently.
- We will launch three pilot sites beyond north-west London, sharing learning across the UK. Alongside this, we will host an annual international learning and knowledge-



exchange event with Best For Us Denmark, strengthening global collaboration and bringing new insights back into the programme.

Priority 2 – Volunteering for Health

Volunteering for Health is a national programme delivered in partnership with NHS England and NHS Charities Together, designed to strengthen the infrastructure, visibility and impact of volunteering across health and social care. This draws on our strong track record of building system-level partnerships and working across regional geographies, enabling us to support innovation well beyond our own sites.

Over the next phase, we will continue delivering all aspects of financial and operational reporting, governance, evaluation and learning. This includes supporting local and national partners to share insights, strengthen their volunteer pathways and develop models that can be replicated across systems. Alongside this, we will sustain the infrastructure needed to deliver the programme effectively, ensuring that partnerships have the capacity, tools and coordination required to maximise the role of volunteers in meeting local needs.

We will work closely with local partnerships to help them act as champions for volunteering, making sure the voices of volunteers and those who rely on them are represented in decision-making. By doing so, we aim to support the development of a national network of organisations committed to unlocking the full potential of volunteers across health and care settings.

The final element of this work is ensuring a smooth and effective handover of the national healthcare volunteering programme with our partners once delivery is complete. This will include consolidating learning, producing accessible guidance, and creating a clear legacy that NHS England and local systems can build on. Our goal is to leave behind not just a completed programme, but a strengthened national approach to volunteering – one that supports operational performance, enhances patient experience and continues to evolve in response to the needs of the NHS and the communities it serves.

Priority 3 – NHS Arts

In 2025, CW+ merged with Paintings in Hospitals (PiH), inheriting a diverse art collection of more than 3,000 artworks. Our ambition for the collection was to continue, and expand on, the legacy of PiH and explore ways of making art available to as many people as possible in healthcare settings. That ambition has now evolved into NHS Arts.

Over the next three years, NHS Arts will focus on stabilising, strengthening and reimagining the role of art within health and care systems across England. A major focus will be generating a robust evidence base for creative health. Through targeted regional pilots, we



will test scalable, efficient models of delivery that deepen community engagement and prove how creativity can be integrated into clinical and non-clinical environments. A greater focus on digital will further expand the reach of NHS Arts, providing new ways for staff, patients and communities to experience arts and culture. Data-driven evaluation will sit at the centre of all this work, informing a refined, evidence-based national service model.

By 2028, our goal is for NHS Arts to be recognised as a nationally connected, digitally enabled and strategically aligned cultural and health initiative. This will include formalised partnerships across regions, expanded artistic collaboration and an equitable distribution of services so that high-quality creative experiences are accessible wherever people receive care. We aim to place high-quality art and creative practice at the heart of improving health outcomes, enhancing patient and staff experience and strengthening the wellbeing of communities across England.

Our vision is clear: to ensure that creativity – and the proven benefits it brings – is not a luxury or an afterthought, but a core component of how healthcare is delivered across England.

Priority 4 – Neonatal Palliative Care

Over the next three years, CW+ will continue working with NHS partners, the Trust and the True Colours Trust to deliver the Neonatal Palliative Care training programme across England. The programme focuses on ensuring that babies with life-limiting conditions, and their families, receive consistent, compassionate and specialist care. Through structured training and mentorship, it aims to build a confident, skilled workforce able to deliver high-quality neonatal palliative care in all settings.

A key priority for this next, and final, phase is completing delivery to the final five Operational Delivery Networks, ensuring that every region in England has access to the same high-standard training and support. Alongside this, we will work to secure the funding needed to expand the programme to Wales and Scotland if requested, allowing us to support a more unified UK-wide approach to neonatal palliative care.

As the programme grows, CW+ will continue to build its national profile as a trusted partner in delivering specialist training and system-wide improvement beyond north-west London. This work strengthens our reputation for leading impactful programmes across multiple regions and clinical environments.



By increasing access to training and building capacity across the workforce, we aim to ensure that families facing the most difficult circumstances receive the skilled, compassionate support they need, wherever they live.



Core delivery activities

Underpinning all of this work is our core infrastructure, which we will continue to develop and invest in.

Finance:

The long-term capital fund is maintained in real terms to balance intergenerational equity between current and future generations. The capital fund is held in property and diversified listed investments. It is managed with the support of expert investment advisers. It targets a return of Inflation (CPI) +4.5%. A drawdown rate of 4% of the listed portfolio plus property income is targeted for allocation to operational expenditure but may need to be exceeded in the short term.

To maintain a balanced budget, fundraising and communications costs need to be covered by appeal income. Project costs will need to cover staff working on the project. The long-term capital fund will deliver circa £1.8m per annum, which will provide funds for the Arts and Design programme, the Grants programme and the Innovation programme. CW+ support and infrastructure costs will be apportioned to cost centres on the basis of the team numbers in each area.

Priority 1 – maintain the long-term capital fund in real terms.

Priority 2 – deliver a balanced unrestricted fund budget.

Priority 3 – ensure funding for a discretionary Grants programme of at least £500k per annum.

Priority 4 – deliver at least a 4:1 return on fundraising and marketing costs.

Fundraising:

Against the backdrop of an evolving landscape, fundraising at CW+ continues to major on philanthropy as a leading source of income. This new strategic period will mark the close of the Thirty at Thirty appeal, which presents an opportunity for us to recalibrate support behind new priorities, testing the feasibility of and building engagement with these through our Development Board, which remains central to our work. As our project portfolio broadens from the locality of our hospitals into a programme of activities that have regional, national and international relevance, we will place continued focus on sustaining and evolving our base of high-value givers, working closely to maximise available networks of support and aiming to deepen multi-faceted, long-term relationships with major donors, trusts and corporate partners.

In parallel, we will work to develop and establish new channels of generating income that enable greater flexibility for meeting the priorities and needs of our charity and the Trust as



they arise, through the diversification of our fundraising portfolio and by working towards a sustainable increase in unrestricted funds. In partnership with Communications and Marketing colleagues, we will continue to build engagement with a wide range of donor audiences through digital media and storytelling, reflecting the diversity of our community and widening our contactable supporter base.

Priority 1 – successfully close Thirty at Thirty Appeal to target and across committed projects.

Priority 2 – actively expand and diversify the fundraising portfolio to raise greater levels of unrestricted income and sustain long-term, consistent levels of income growth including legacies.

Priority 3 – provide programmatic funding for core priorities of this strategy, including Best For You and Infectious Diseases.

Priority 4 – strategically build donor engagement with new and emerging priorities including NHS Arts and, potentially, paediatrics.

Communications:

In the last three years, CW+ has significantly increased its reach and brand recognition within the communities it serves. A refreshed brand, new website, extensive on-site collateral and the launch of a West Mid-specific Facebook channel have all contributed to this growth. At the same time, vital digital infrastructure has been developed to ensure that data is captured accurately. Building on this success remains a priority in order to support long-term income growth by widening the charity's contactable supporter base.

The communications landscape is changing constantly, and we will continue to investigate new channels, outlets and ideas to develop the narrative of CW+ as a leader in its field.

Priority 1 – widen digital reach to support the development of a strong donor base.

Priority 2 – strengthen audience engagement to increase supporter loyalty.

Priority 3 – build on the charity's strong visual brand to raise awareness in our hospitals and communities.

Priority 4 – develop the charity's external positioning to support its strategic objectives.

People and resources:

Our staff, and the wide range of skills, experience and expertise they bring, are our most important asset in terms of delivering on our strategic aims. In a competitive market, we want to make sure that we can recruit and retain the best talent and provide a working environment that enables staff to develop and thrive. As part of this, we need to have



appropriate systems and facilities to support people in delivering to the very best of their abilities, and provide training and development where we know they can go further.

We need to ensure we have the resources in place to deliver the programme of activities, while ensuring that they are affordable and appropriately costed within the budgets available. This may need careful management of team resources in the context of the financial constraints.

Priority 1 – ensure underlying resources are appropriate for activity and affordable in the context of the financial priorities.

Priority 2 – support the continuing training, development and wellbeing of our workforce.

Priority 3 – work alongside key external partners including our Board of Trustees, Development Board and other external leadership groups, drawing on their expertise and using their role as ‘critical friend’ to support the delivery of our 2026-29 strategy.