



Borderlands' Strategic Plan | April 2026 – March 2029

Contents

Executive Summary	2
Organisational Purpose	3
About Borderlands	3
Our Mission	3
Our Vision	4
Our Values	4
Needs Analysis	4
National Policy Environment	5
Bristol Context	6
Member Data	7
SWOT Analysis	8
Our Strategic Aims	11
Resources and Capacity	13
Monitoring, Review and Learning	14
Risks and Assumptions	14
Longer Term Outlook	15

Executive Summary

Throughout this three year strategy period, we have further established our reputation as a key player in the refugee support sector in Bristol; delivering high-quality, culturally appropriate services to meet the basic needs of vulnerable migrants across the city.

Borderlands is a model of how to welcome and support people, working effectively with our partners. Last year, we provided life-changing support to over 1700 people and at any one time, we are working with around 250 individuals.

Our Projects

We currently deliver the following activities:

1. *The Welcome Centre*: a comprehensive welcome service with hot lunch, practical orientation, information and signposting, art therapy and wellbeing, IT café, games and barbers
2. *Access to free, healthy food*: Social Supermarket, Monday Cooking Club, breakfast bar and hot lunches
3. *Feel Good Project*: wellbeing activities including yoga, sewing, climbing, photography, sleep and relaxation
4. *The Outreach Project*: health and wellbeing support and navigation, with practical support, activities/trips and workshops
5. *The Learning Project*: drop-in and intensive ESOL courses, poetry and maths classes
6. *The Mentoring Project*: individualised partnerships offering practical and emotional support to sanctuary seekers
7. *The Changemakers*: members with lived experience who shape Borderlands' projects and governance

Our Impact

As a result of our work, asylum seekers and refugees (our members):

- Feel included in the community that they choose
- Have the skills and confidence to live independent lives
- Have strong social networks of mutual support and solidarity
- Experience positive mental and physical health outcomes
- Can participate freely in the city's cultural life
- Know how to navigate the asylum process, housing, benefits system and education/employment

As we move through 2026 however, the political context we operate in is increasingly tense and challenging. This year, and the years to come, will be defining for migration and social justice in the UK, shaped by rising far-right activity, public anxiety about immigration and asylum, hostile policy shifts, the cost of living crisis and mounting security concerns.

Against this backdrop, we anticipate growing competition for funding as charities like ours are forced into a resource scarcity mindset. The VCSE sector in Bristol, and the Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership (BRASP) in particular, is uniquely collaborative, however when resources are restricted partners can feel pushed into competing for limited funding pots. If the funding environment is adversely impacted by the deteriorating political landscape, it may be necessary to consider closer ties and merges across organisations. Looking ahead, Borderlands will be led by our values and will strive to maintain an open, transparent and cooperative approach to partnership working. We will put members' needs first and continually ask ourselves how we can best add strategic value to the sector.

Achieving the Plan

Despite starting this financial year in a strong position, we anticipate that the remainder of this strategic period will present a much more challenging funding environment. Fundraising colleagues across the national refugee sector have observed that 30% fewer grants were awarded to refugee support charities in 2025/26 compared with the previous year, and even well-established national charities are affected, with both British Red Cross and Refugee Council having to cut services and going through £1.2m worth of redundancies due to funding deficits.

We are aiming for sustainability and budget consolidation, to prioritise achieving the plan as laid out here, rather than unsustainable growth into new areas of work. We will take the following steps to ensure sustainable income generation to enable us to fulfil the objectives of this strategic plan:

1. Utilise connections with grant managers and Board members
2. Be bolder and more ambitious with funding requests
3. Prioritise applications for higher and multi-year grants
4. Engage friendly corporates to offer a Lunch & Learn
5. Effective stewarding of regular individual givers and major donors
6. Organise regular fundraising events
7. Promote legacy donations via our newsletter and website

Borderlands maintains free reserves equivalent to 4–6 months of normal operating expenditure. These reserves are held to provide financial stability, ensure the continuity of services in the event of unexpected income shortfalls or unforeseen costs, and allow the charity sufficient time to respond to changing circumstances. The trustees review the level of reserves regularly to ensure it remains appropriate to the charity's size, activities, risks, and future plans. At present, based on average monthly costs, the free reserves would fund the charity for just under six months if no further income came in.

Organisational Purpose

About Borderlands

Borderlands has been supporting refugees, asylum seekers and those with insecure immigration status since 2011.

Borderlands is a charity working alongside asylum seekers, refugees, migrants with unsettled status. Established in 2011, the charity emerged from the Christian mission of St Nicholas of Tolentino Church in Easton, a deprived and diverse inner-city area, where the church has a long history of providing support to the local community in need. Through the relationships established between the parish and those seeking refuge over a number of years, we were able to identify the needs of those seeking refuge and the best way to respond.

Our trustees, staff, volunteers, and most importantly, our members (service-users) are made up of people of all faiths and none.

Our Mission

Our mission is to serve people who have been disadvantaged, marginalised and have experienced forced displacement. We work with asylum seekers, refugees and those with insecure immigration status, primarily in the wider Bristol area, to:

Enhance their social inclusion and wellbeing,

Support those in poverty,

Raise awareness of their needs and experiences among the wider community.

We work with people regardless of race, disability, sex, age, religious belief or sexual orientation. We create a welcoming community that supports people on their journey to securing 'leave to remain' in the UK and to feeling included, valued and independent in their new communities.

Our Vision

We have a vision for a world where refugees, asylum seekers and those with insecure immigration status are welcomed with sanctuary and justice, have their needs met and their ambitions realised, and develop the power to build the lives they choose.

We strive for a future in which all vulnerable migrants are supported from exclusion to belonging.

Our Values

- **Warmth:** Borderlands is an inclusive space that greets people with a warm welcome and creates a long-lasting sense of belonging.
- **Connection:** Borderlands is a community where genuine relationships are forged across difference and where sharing is a radical act of solidarity.
- **Dignity:** Borderlands is a place where everyone is recognised as an individual and embraced with dignity.
- **Respect:** Borderlands respects and celebrates the integrity of all individual and group identities. We empower the people we work with and work alongside them, accompanying them on their journey and learning from them.

These values are reflected in the following quotes from members which describe how these are put into practice:

Warmth <i>"Seeing the reaction of staff in the Welcome Centre when we arrive makes us all feel cherished."</i>	Connection <i>"Every minute we spent together was worth it. I learned so much, and I'm grateful - I hope we stay friends forever."</i>
Dignity <i>"Advocating for my mentee when she was in hospital meant everything. Without this programme, she would've been alone."</i>	Respect <i>"When you're in bad circumstances, having someone guide you gives you real energy. It changed me."</i>

Needs Analysis

National Policy Environment

Changing Political Landscape

- We are moving towards a more entrenched multi-party system in which an “anti-system” voter bloc is fuelling the rise of both Reform UK and the Greens, both of which purport more extremist views towards immigration
- The internal tensions within Labour and the possibility of a leadership challenge could alter migration policy and rhetoric in the coming months/years
- There has been a shift of migration debates away from economics towards questions of values and British identity. What used to be arguments around resource (can we afford them) now pertain to the deeper morality of “do we want them here?”
- We have witnessed the growing power and mobilisation of the far right. Electoral gains for Reform UK have prompted large-scale far-right street actions and major rallies are planned for Spring and Summer of 2026. In the meantime, strong Reform performance in local elections could embolden other far right and extremist micro-groups
- Against this backdrop, we have seen pervasive security and safety threats for migrants-justice organisations (including staff, volunteers and members) which traps organisations in crisis-mode firefighting and impacts operations
- The impact of explicitly Islamophobic and anti-migrant rhetoric can be seen on lived experience leadership, as staff with refugee backgrounds might feel afraid to progress or remain in the sector
- The far right has also become increasingly emboldened and is carrying out politically motivated complaints; weaponising charity regulation by reporting organisations to the Charity Commission, e.g. <https://cityofsanctuary.org/2026/04/07/charity-commission/>

Asylum and Migration Policy Overhaul

- Under the new rules, refugee status has become temporary, with periodic reviews every 30 months rather than an automatic path to permanent residency
- For many who arrive via irregular routes (such as small-boats or unauthorised crossings), there would be a 20-year wait before being eligible for permanent settlement. This represents a dramatic increase from the previous 5-year standard
- The statutory duty to provide automatic housing and financial support to people seeking asylum will be ended
- Those with a right to work but who are not working, or who have assets, could be required to contribute to their accommodation costs
- In some cases, there will be powers to seize valuables (e.g. jewellery or high-value items) from small-boat arrivals, though sentimental items like wedding rings are reportedly exempt
- The reforms include fast-track deportations, limits on repetitive appeals, and changes to how the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), particularly “right to family/private life” under Article 8 can be used by people seeking asylum to avoid deportation. Under the new rules, only certain close relatives (e.g. parent or child) may rely on Article 8 protections

Shabana Mahmood (Home Secretary) has pledged to open three new “safe and legal” routes for what she terms “genuine refugees”, however these routes will be capped annually and numbers are to start modestly:

1. A community-sponsorship scheme (building on the existing “Homes for Ukraine” model), where individuals or host families can sponsor refugees.
2. A pathway for skilled or talented individuals displaced by conflict to come to the UK and work.
3. A study-route for displaced students to continue education in the UK.

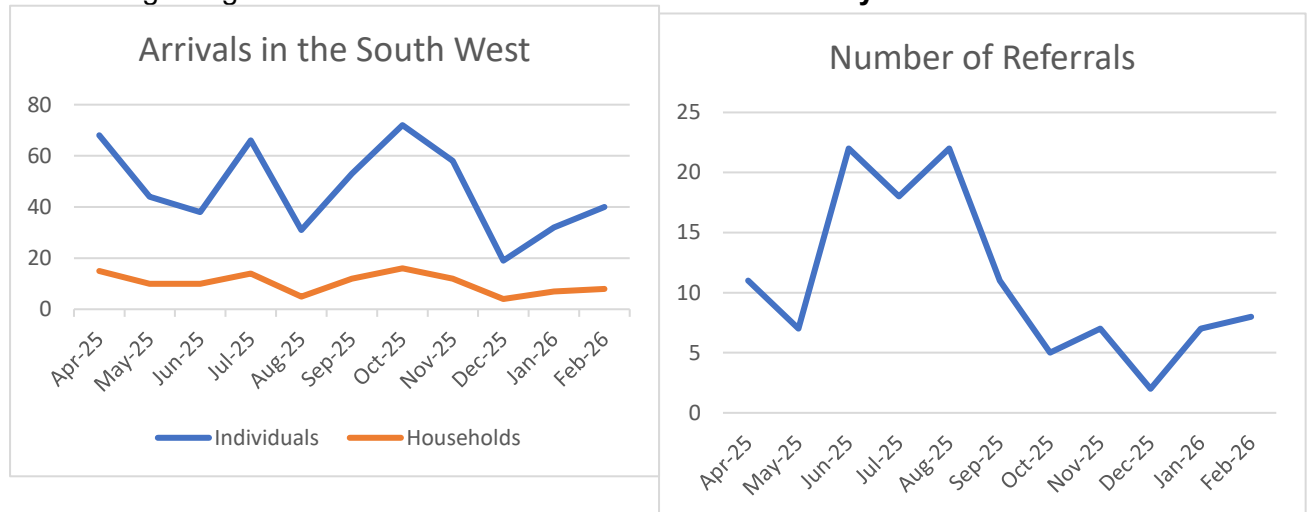
Recent National Statistics

- 101,000 people claimed asylum in 2025, which is 4% less than the previous year
- Half of asylum seekers who arrived in the U.K came via irregular routes, such as small boats, while a further 39% of claimants had previously arrived in the U.K
- There was a 56% increase on initial decisions in comparison to 2024
- The number of people in receipt of asylum support has fallen by 5%, including a 19% reduction in the number of asylum seekers in hotel accommodation
- The grant rate at the end of December 2025 slightly reduced to 42%

Bristol Context

Resettlement

Since the beginning of April 2025, **521 individuals** have arrived in the South West. The average length of time from date of referral to arrival is **25 days**.



Asylum Hotels – (as of 1st April 2026)

The Hampton by Hilton Bristol

Current occupancy: 147

Maximum capacity: 436

➔ Children Breakdown:

- Ages 0-4: 24
- Ages 5-11: 05
- Ages 12-17: 07
- Total Children: 36

➔ Family & Gender Breakdown:

- Single Females: 41
- Families of 2: 21
- Families of 3: 12
- Families of 4: 03
- Families of 5: 03

Mercure Holland House

Current occupancy: 201

Maximum capacity: 600

- Single females: 5
- Single males: 49
- Families of 2: 7
- Families of 3: 19
- Families of 4: 13
- Families of 5: 3
- Families of 6+: 1
- Ages 0-4: 29
- Ages 5-11: 18
- Ages 12-17: 20
- Total Children: 67
- Pregnant women: 2
- Arrivals total: 3
- Departures total: 14

Mercure Brigstow

➔ Current occupancy: 118

➔ Maximum capacity: 225

Asylum Dispersal Accommodation

Whilst the practice of dispersing asylum seekers to Bristol continues at present, it is not yet clear if or how the overall numbers of dispersed and newly arrived asylum seekers in the city will be impacted by policy changes and the probable closure of the final hotels over the course of the current year.

The target for dispersed asylum seeker accommodation in Bristol is approximately 730 but the shortage of rental accommodation currently prevents this; current numbers in dispersal accommodation are estimated to be around 400. It is also not yet known what alternative or changed accommodation and support arrangements will be introduced by central government as hotel closures continue, and what their impact will be on the level, nature and geography of support needs.

Member Data

Project/activity	Number of individuals supported in 2025/26
Welcome Centre	981 unique members 6745 attendances 321 new members registered Average of 90 per week
Food Provision (Social Supermarket)	290 unique members 1704 attendances Average of 95 per week
Feel Good Wednesday	210 unique members Average of 45 per week
Mentoring Project	70 unique mentees 502 mentoring meetings held
Learning Project	376 unique learners 3455 attendances 610 English classes delivered

Outreach Project	778 unique hotel residents
Members who volunteered with Borderlands	157 volunteers 46 member volunteers 565 hours per week
Total number of members supported	Total: 1714 Refugees: 283 Asylum seekers: 703 NRPF: 19 Other vulnerable migrants: 709
Top nationalities of current members supported	Afghan Sudanese Iranian Syrian Eritrean

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Services are member-led, consistently meet member needs and fill gaps in the sector</p> <p>Sector wide network: BRASP, Bristol Refugee Forum, Asylum and Refugee Wellbeing Forum – ability to provide wraparound support through effective signposting and referrals</p> <p>Responsiveness and flexibility: e.g. setting up Social Supermarket during Covid, responding to the opening and closure of hotels</p> <p>Committed and highly skilled team</p> <p>Robust and committed volunteer base</p> <p>Strong reputation in the public eye: leads to fundraising, volunteering and awareness raising opportunities</p> <p>The building: affordable, accessible, facilities</p>	<p>Workload: new projects and additional events leading to heavy workload for staff</p> <p>The building: safety issues, lack of space in the Welcome Centre for confidential conversations</p> <p>Internet issues in the Welcome Centre</p> <p>Data: access to accurate contextual data to plan services, CRM software fit for purpose for monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Training needs: mental health first aid</p> <p>Knowing our limitations: explaining what we do and don't do to members</p> <p>Influencing and advocacy: having time and resource to raise our collective voice for change</p> <p>Changes in Board of Trustees</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Changes in local context: engagement of asylum seekers in other areas of the city</p> <p>Co-production with members: the participation of the Changemakers in every aspect of Borderlands' governance and service-delivery</p> <p>Diversifying the Board of Trustees as long-standing members approach the end of their term of office</p> <p>New partnerships with neighbourhood community centres</p>	<p>Changes in national policy: member uncertainty, staff stress, shrinking statutory funding</p> <p>Far right mobilisation: safety threats to staff, volunteers and members, digital security, operational risks, weaponisation of the Charity Commission</p> <p>Safeguarding concerns in asylum hotels and dispersal areas (inequality across Bristol)</p> <p>Restrictive funding environment</p>

<p>Outreach delivery in community outposts</p> <p>Stronger relationship with Bristol City Council: new Sanctuary Strategy aligns with our own</p> <p>New volunteer referral pathways: e.g. through STAR</p> <p>Diversifying income generation: corporate partnerships, individual giving, community fundraising</p> <p>Technology: harnessing new channels to support members transitioning through dispersal</p> <p>Closer collaborative working with BRASP partners</p>	<p>Staff burnout</p> <p>Protracted global conflicts: impact on demographics, members' wellbeing, cost of living/operational costs and public donations</p> <p>Homelessness: demand on housing in Bristol is high and exacerbated by universities</p> <p>Access to legal expertise</p>
---	---

We have a vision for a world where refugees, asylum seekers and those with insecure immigration status are welcomed with sanctuary and justice, have their needs met and their ambitions realised, and develop the power to build the lives they choose. We strive for a future in which all vulnerable migrants are supported from exclusion to belonging.

Activities we will provide	Short term outputs: <i>supported at times of crisis</i>	Long term outcomes: <i>building social connections</i>	The impact: <i>choice and autonomy</i>
The Welcome Centre: a comprehensive welcome service with hot lunch, practical orientation, information and signposting, art therapy and wellbeing, IT café, games and barbers	Members are given the knowledge and information they need to access the support they need	Members feel a sense of belonging at Borderlands	Asylum seekers and refugees feel included in the community that they choose
Access to free, healthy food: Social Supermarket, Monday Cooking Club, breakfast bar and hot lunches	Members' immediate needs are met (access to food, a shower, SIM card, health information)	Members build social connections and feel part of a community	Asylum seekers and refugees have the skills and confidence to live independent lives
Feel Good Project: wellbeing activities including yoga, sewing, climbing, photography, sleep and relaxation	Members are supported to overcome food poverty	Members have moved past the point of crisis and towards stability	Asylum seekers and refugees have strong social networks of mutual support and solidarity
The Outreach Project: health and wellbeing support and navigation, with practical support, activities/trips and workshops	Members feel safe and welcomed at Borderlands	Members are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to advocate for their rights	Members experience positive mental and physical health outcomes
The Learning Project: drop-in and intensive ESOL courses, poetry and maths classes	Members know how to access appropriate health care (physical and mental health)	Members experience improved general wellbeing	Asylum seekers and refugees can participate freely in the city's cultural life
The Mentoring Project: individualised partnerships offering practical and emotional support to sanctuary seekers	Members know how to access the full range of Borderlands' projects and wider sector services	A diverse range of members have equitable access to internal and external services	Borderlands is a model of how to welcome and support people, working effectively with our partners
The Changers: members with lived experience who shape Borderlands' projects and governance	Members can access opportunities to learn and practice English	Volunteers, including member-volunteers, access opportunities to learn in a professional environment	Asylum seekers and refugees know how to navigate the asylum process, housing, benefits system and education/employment
	Members are supported to navigate personal challenges in the asylum process, housing, benefits system or education/employment	Members have choice and dignity	
	Members have access to opportunities to influence Borderlands	Members have developed confidence, self-esteem and a sense of purpose	

Our Strategic Aims

Over the next three years, we will aim to:

1. Champion lived experience leadership through staff, volunteering and governance opportunities and through the development of the Changemakers' group
2. Extend our structured welcome services to underserved groups of refugees and asylum seekers beyond the Welcome Centre and hotels to dispersed communities
3. Integrate a strategic focus of health and wellbeing into the outreach project and wider services, enabling members to address their wellbeing needs and improve their health outcomes
4. Adapt the scope of the Learning Project in response to member needs and available funding, to include the intensive ESOL course, maths classes and poetry
5. Participate in campaigning and advocacy initiatives to stand in solidarity with our members
6. Develop our 'infrastructure' to ensure we are proactively anti-racist, resilient and stable

1. Champion lived experience leadership through staff, volunteering and governance opportunities and through the development of the Changemakers' group

- Offer opportunities to our members to participate in shaping, developing, evaluating and giving feedback on our services
- Encourage and support staff with lived experience to attend BRASP Peer Support Network meetings and 1:1 supervision with TFSW
- Develop routes to leadership and realistic pathways to independence for members so they can become a staff member, trustee or volunteer with Borderlands or elsewhere
- Establish supported pathways into governance for members of the Changemakers: e.g. 1:1 mentoring with current trustees, bespoke governance training sessions

2. Extend our structured welcome services to underserved groups of refugees and asylum seekers beyond the Welcome Centre and hotels to dispersed communities

- Ensure Welcome Desk, Registration and Outreach Volunteers are fully trained, values-led and familiar with Borderlands' introduction, induction and welcome processes
- Develop and communicate our 'journey' model so that members are able to access different services to help them at different stages on their journey
- Coordinate with partner agencies and neighbourhood community centres to ensure that all new arrivals, across hotels and dispersal accommodation, are welcomed and know of our services
- Make ourselves more visible to people who need our services and ensure we offer the right services
- Strengthen use of CRM software to avoid duplication of profiles and ensure careful and comprehensive data collection

3. Integrate a strategic focus of health and wellbeing into the outreach project and wider services

- Develop our partnership with Bristol Mind and the Hope Service to tackle the growing need for access to mental health services, working in partnership with specialist providers in a trauma-informed model

- Deliver monthly health systems workshops across the asylum hotels and Welcome Centres to explain the roles of each NHS agency
- Create a health systems toolkit that can be translated, printed and distributed city-wide
- Enable members to address their own wellbeing needs and improve their health outcomes

4. Adapt the scope of the Learning Project in response to member needs and available funding

- Coordinate the community and intensive ESOL offer across BRASP
- Maintain our position as strategic and operational ESOL lead in the VCSE sector in Bristol
- Participate in strategic regional fora and networks, such as the South West ESOL Network
- Successfully develop the statutory-funded intensive ESOL course, in collaboration with BRASP delivery partners, and draw learning to shape delivery post-cessation of funding
- Evaluate the experiences of Borderlands' learners and innovate in response; e.g. introducing additional maths/poetry sessions
- Develop closer ties with statutory delivery partners, including FE colleges and BCC classes, to strengthen referral pathways and reduce waiting times for learners
- Respond to the continually changing context in the city; e.g. introducing and closing classes in the asylum hotels

5. Participate in campaigning and advocacy initiatives to stand in solidarity with our members

- Ensure we are up-to-date and engaged in the national, regional and local debate on policy and legislative proposals, e.g. through strategic fora such as the South West councils and ESOL network
- Support Bristol City of Sanctuary's Campaigns Coordinator to spearhead local campaigns, such as the movement for free bus travel for asylum seekers
- Work with BRASP to strengthen the regularity and attendance of the Strategic Working Group for Influencing & Advocacy, to extend participation to staff and volunteers as well as CEOs
- Run quarterly policy discussion groups for Borderlands' staff as part of continuous professional development

6. Develop our 'infrastructure' to ensure we are proactively anti-racist, pro LGBTQ+, resilient and stable

- Develop Borderlands' strong individual identity within the sector
- Commit to meeting the principles of organisational resilience across everything we do:
 - Purpose – deliver with clarity and integrity
 - Money – manage with intention and control
 - People – maintain an appetite to learn, while championing professional boundaries
- Continue our journey of exploring and understanding what it means to work with people of all faiths and none, given our proud history arising from the Parish and being based at St Nicholas' Church of Tolentino
- Continually review the balance (and return on investment) between in-house capacity and consultancy services in areas such as fundraising, accountancy, HR and IT

- Ringfence training budgets for staff and volunteers and build a culture of professional curiosity and continuous learning and development
- Review our need for alternative facilities as our services develop, the security threat changes, and we require additional space for confidential work and a safe place to decompress and take short rests from work
- Ensure all organisational policies are anti-racist, pro-LGBTQ+ and have staff wellbeing at their core and are maintained up to date

Resources and Capacity

In this period, we will prioritise the following resource areas:

Staffing

- Recruitment of an in-house fundraiser to lead on institutional and corporate fundraising
- Induction of maternity covers
- Retention of dedicated staff team
- Support for staff line management, therapeutic supervision and wellbeing

Volunteers

- Retention of large volunteer base
- Recruitment of volunteers in key areas (art therapy table, board games, outreach drop-ins, mentors)

Board

- Recruitment of a new Chair of Trustees
- Recruitment of trustees with specialist expertise in: HR, fundraising/philanthropy, finance, co-production and legal
- Recruitment of trustees with lived experience of forced displacement

Systems

- Updating our CRM software to ensure it is fit for purpose for recording member and volunteer data, monitoring and reporting

Infrastructure

- Working with the Landlord to optimise safety measures in the building to ensure security of staff, volunteers and members at all times (light sensors, lock box, intruder alarms, ventilation)
- Improving internet access across the building

Monitoring, Review and Learning

Borderlands has a strong professional focus on reflective practice. This helps us to learn from members, centre their experience and adapt our projects to respond to their needs and interests.

Objectives

1. To measure impact, not just activity – ensure that our work is actually making a difference for beneficiaries
2. To improve programmes and services – create a culture of continual learning
3. To provide evidence of outcomes to funders – demonstrate effectiveness
4. To provide accountability to stakeholders - build trust and transparency
5. To empower members by listening to their voices – understand needs from the service-user perspective
6. To guide strategic planning – help us to align activities with our long-term mission

Risks and Mitigation

- Low feedback – more suitable methods considered (e.g. visual data collection, translated materials)
- Limited staff capacity – volunteers trained to support with data collection
- Sensitive contexts – all staff and volunteers trained in trauma-informed practice, confidentiality and anonymity prioritised
- Data security risks – Borderlands seeking development support for enhanced data protection measures

Project M&E Workplans

Each project has developed a bespoke workplan that sets out the M&E lead, the quantitative data points to collect, the qualitative questions to include in data surveys and the data collection methods (e.g. focus groups, member surveys, case studies and volunteer questionnaires). Data will be collected on a quarterly and annual basis, in a way that forefronts ethical considerations such as informed consent, the principle of do no harm and trauma-informed practice.

Risks and Assumptions

We operate in an uncertain and changing environment, due to political, economic and geopolitical issues which are beyond our control. We need to be resilient to be able to deal with the risks and challenges we face, whilst being open to the opportunities that will arise.

- Demand for our services may increase faster than we can expand resources, so we need to be able to say no when necessary and to ensure that we stay focused on our core services
- Growth in service delivery may be constrained by space and resource limitations, so we need to consider our medium and long-term options, which include pursuing alternative building options in case of increased security threat

- Legislative changes may prevent us from delivering some of our services and our funding may be impacted by economic turmoil, so we need to be able to pivot and adjust our service delivery as needed
- Geopolitical and public health events such as protracted war and viral pandemics may increase demand for services with little warning and environmental impact may cause larger numbers of refugees to move to the UK, so we need to be clear about how much demand we can absorb
- We will continue to develop and train our staff and volunteers so they are prepared for changes in our services. This will help us to maintain flexibility, be innovative and resilient
- We will continue to build good relationships with the wider community and optimise our partnerships with statutory and non-statutory agencies, through BRASP and beyond
- We will implement our new M&E Framework to strengthen our methods of engaging members through feedback and participation in improving our services and processes

Longer Term Outlook

Over the next three years, rising far-right activity, heightened public anxiety around immigration, restrictive policy shifts, and the ongoing cost of living crisis are expected to place sustained pressure on both refugees and the organisations that support them. In this context, Borderlands will remain firmly values-led, prioritising warmth, connection, dignity and respect for everyone, while adapting to a more competitive and resource-constrained funding landscape. Our strategic outlook will focus on deepening our impact while building resilience and sustainability in a challenging and uncertain funding, political and social environment.

Recognising the risk that scarcity can strain even the strongest partnerships, the organisation will work proactively to sustain Bristol's collaborative VCSE culture and contribute constructively to maintaining the Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership (BRASP). This may include exploring deeper forms of collaboration, including shared services or potential organisational mergers, where doing so would strengthen collective impact.

Throughout, the charity will maintain an open, transparent, and cooperative approach, consistently centring the needs of its members and seeking to add strategic value across the sector while safeguarding its long-term sustainability.

Internally, a top priority is supporting the wellbeing of our staff and volunteers, many of whom have lived experience, and all of whom could be affected by the increasingly hostile environment. Our highly skilled, committed and culturally competent workforce, supported by volunteers, ensure our work is underpinned by quality and continuity. Overall, Borderlands will aim to transition from a reactive service provider to a proactive, collaborative, and evidence-led organisation that plays a central role in enabling refugees to rebuild their lives and contribute fully to their communities.