



NOVA NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Impact Report

2025





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Lived experience + world-class professionalism: Nova combines deep community trust and representation with high standards, qualified specialists, and rigorous delivery.

Executive Summary

In 2025, Nova New Opportunities supported 2,333 people across North Kensington and neighbouring communities through a joined-up model of advice, education, family support and social change. Working in the long shadow of Grenfell, Nova exists for people facing poverty, exclusion and multiple overlapping barriers — many from Black, minoritised ethnic and migrant communities, many living on very low incomes, and many carrying the weight of trauma, insecure housing and financial hardship. In this context, Nova is more than a service provider: it is a trusted, relational organisation that helps people feel safer, stronger and less alone.

That trust is reflected in our results with 88% of participants reporting increased confidence, 89% improved wellbeing, 93% stronger community engagement, and an exceptional Net Promoter Score of +78.

Nova's impact is both immediate and long term. Through Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG), Adult Education, Family Programme, and Social Change, we help people stabilise in crisis, build skills, support their children, strengthen their wellbeing and reconnect with opportunity.

In 2025, this included 616 IAG clients supported with 2,289 outcomes achieved and at least £204,134 in direct financial gains for residents; 179 adult learners attending 3,781 sessions and gaining 66 accredited qualifications; 1,486 children, young people and adults supported through the Family Programme; and 389 people engaged in social change activity that built connection, voice and civic participation.

Participants consistently describe Nova as warm, dependable, emotionally safe and deeply rooted in the community — not transactional, but genuinely on people's side.

Nova also delivers exceptional value. In 2025, we spent £742,162, directed 97% of expenditure to charitable activities, and generated an estimated £3.96 million in social value — around £5.34 for every £1 spent.

Alongside this, strong partnerships with major institutions help us extend what is possible for local people while keeping our offer ambitious and high quality. At the same time, like many charities, Nova has been operating in an increasingly difficult climate of rising costs, rising demand and stretched financial resilience. We have taken decisive action to reduce costs and enter 2026/27 on a leaner, more sustainable footing. The crucial task now is to rebuild reserves so that this trusted, high-impact organisation has the resilience and working capital needed not just to survive uncertainty, but to move forward with confidence.

Support at this moment has real leverage: it protects proven frontline work, strengthens recovery, and helps secure the future of an organisation that is deeply valued by the community it serves.



Why This Work Is Essential Now

Our community—and the wider UK—is living through stacked, intersecting pressures that compound disadvantage:

- Austerity's long tail: reduced support, rising thresholds, fragmented safety nets
- Brexit-era polarisation: rising hate and scapegoating
- Grenfell and its legacy: trauma, distrust, housing precarity, and the visibility of structural injustice
- COVID-19: worsened mental health, disrupted education, destabilised livelihoods
- Black Lives Matter: a renewed spotlight on structural racism, alongside backlash
- The cost-of-living crisis: prices remain elevated and many households are still under pressure
- Global instability: migration pressures and deepening inequality

Nationally, poverty risk is shaped by intersecting inequalities: age, disability, family composition, gender, geography. These pressures interact strongly with ethnicity and migration status.






The Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlights the heightened poverty risks faced by migrant families, including barriers relating to work, housing, insecurity, and—for some—"no recourse to public funds."

Local Need: A Borough of Extremes

Kensington & Chelsea is defined by extremes of wealth and poverty. North Kensington wards experience concentrated disadvantage alongside some of the highest wealth in the UK.

Note: While most of our community is in North Kensington, we support people from across London, often through referrals, specialist need, and word-of-mouth trust.

Deprivation in North Kensington

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea		In North Kensington
<p>One of the wealthiest boroughs in the UK.</p> <p>14,849 households (20%) are on the Low-Income Family Tracker.</p>		<p>NK has neighbourhoods ranked in the top 8% of most deprived in England and Wales</p> <p>NK has 40% of households in the borough on the Low-Income Family Tracker</p>
<p>Least affordable private rental in the country. Those on median incomes pay 74% of gross income on rent (London 46% / England 36%).</p> <p>18,340 (28%) socially rented households.</p>		<p>67% of properties are socially rented. 27% of properties are overcrowded.</p>
<p>33% of children receive free school meals, vs. London (25.8%) and England (23.8%).</p>		<p>Children are 3x more likely to be overweight in Golborne (NK) vs. Campden ward</p>
<p>RBKC has the second lowest public open space per capita in London: 6.37m2 per person</p>		<p>Many spaces are private or limited access. Notting Dale has far less accessible green space within 1km (42m2) than Queen's Gate, highlighting intra-borough green inequality.</p>
<p>Women have the highest life expectancy in the country. Men have 5th highest.</p>		<p>Life expectancy gaps between richest and poorest wards: men 18 years, women 17 years, the 4th highest gap in the country.</p>

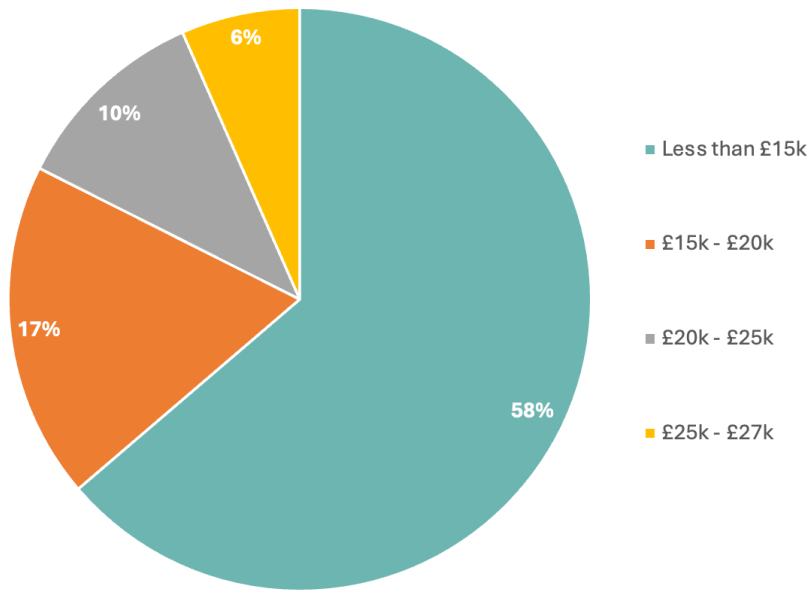


Who We Serve

Serving the poorest wards of North Kensington and those of surrounding London boroughs, in 2025 we delivered to 2,333 people across our four main programme areas:

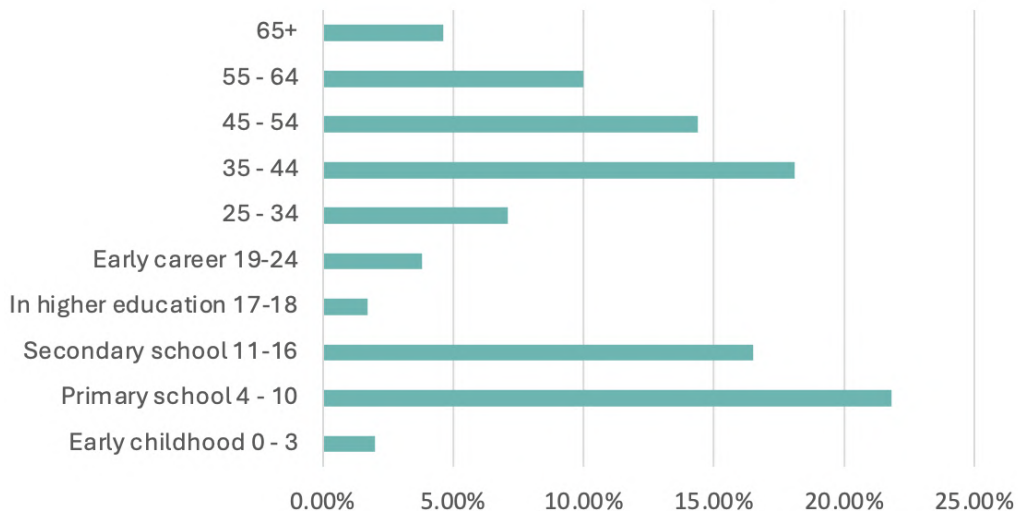
- 91% of people are from Black, Ethnic Minority and migrant communities, many of whom are also refugees, women returning to work and lone parents.
- 91% of households have annual household incomes below London Minimum wage (£27,050).

Annual household incomes below London minimum wage (£27,050)



- 60% of adults are unemployed.
- 57% of households live in social housing; 2% homeless (sofa-surfing, sleeping rough); 9% - in temporary accommodation (including hostel); and 10% - in multi-occupational property (a room or sharing a room).
- 499 children receive free school meals (290 families).
- 26% of beneficiaries have additional needs.

Age of Nova Beneficiaries (yrs)





The Reality Behind the Referral

The people who come to Nova are often living with multiple, overlapping barriers—many of which remain invisible until trust is built:

- Poverty and debt; insecure work or no right to work
- Housing insecurity, overcrowding, homelessness risk
- Trauma, including domestic abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and loss
- Isolation and language barriers
- Poor health and mental distress
- Discrimination, stigma, and reduced access to mainstream services
- Digital exclusion, even among younger adults

For many, the struggle is not a single crisis. It is a mesh of constraints that blocks opportunity at every turn, severely impeding their ability to move forward and improve their quality of life.

Human Stories

Mohammed

An Iranian-Kurdish learner who arrived via small boat crossing while his asylum claim is processed. Describing the journey:

"More than 60 people... I almost died twice."

He is building English and skills to progress when his status changes and he can work

Luci

A survivor of trafficking and coercive control, rebuilding literacy, confidence, and safety.

"The teacher is very good... dedicated, respectful and patience. This is what I need."

Meriem

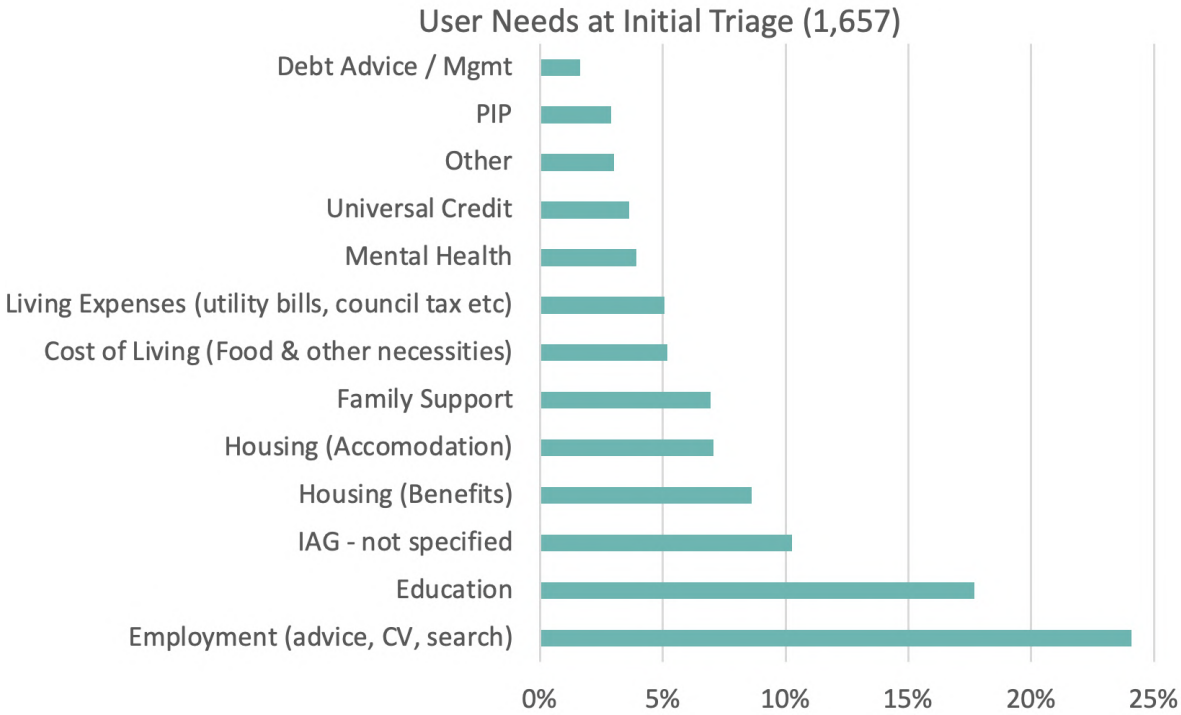
An Eritrean mother moved around the UK through asylum processes, now building English to advocate for her child, navigate systems, and improve employment options.

"Everywhere you need English in this country."

These are not edge cases. They represent the lived reality of many people we support: resourceful, capable people facing structural barriers.

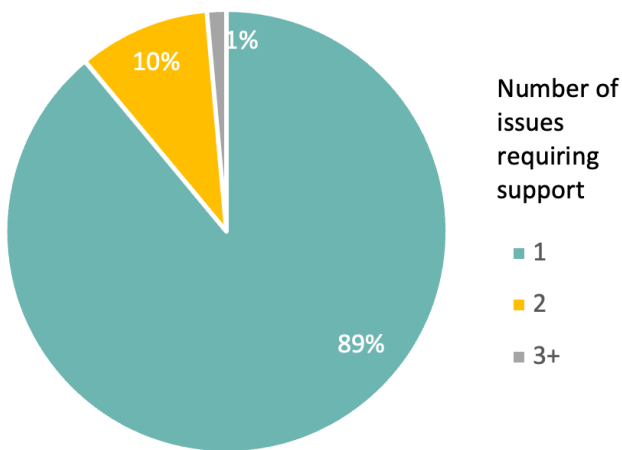


What People Face When They Come to Nova

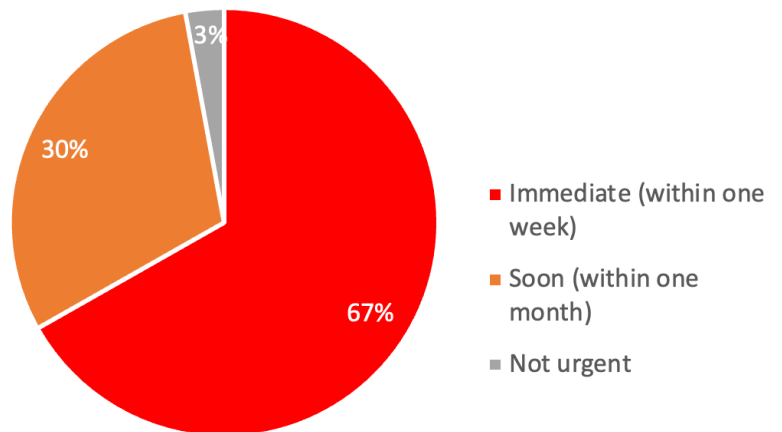


Note: This data represents people who access Nova through our physical reception space. There are multiple access routes including direct referrals, partner referrals and access via outreach delivery venues.

Unique triage records (1,477)



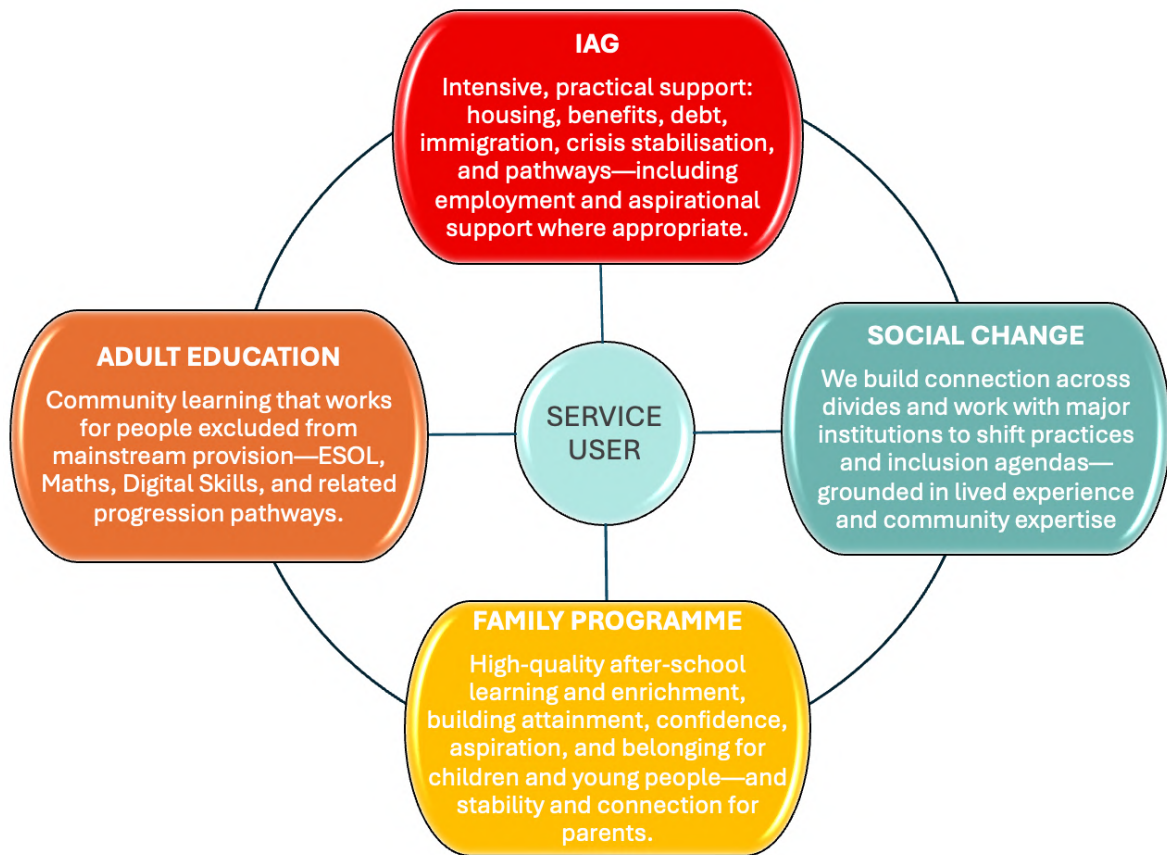
Urgency





What We Delivered in 2025: Reach Across Our Integrated Model

Nova's model is integrated: people may start in one strand and move across others as trust builds and needs evolve. In 2025, our delivery spanned four linked areas:



Key organisation impact data:

93%

Increased their engagement with community – feel less isolated / lonely

89%

Improved their wellbeing and mental health

88%

Increased their confidence

81%

Met someone outside their regular social circle

78%

Learned new skills or improved existing skills

+78

Net Promoter Score (NPS)* for our services

**NPS measures how likely people are to recommend an organisation. For the charity sector, over +60 is viewed as excellent.*

We are proud to have met demand and offered opportunities to our beneficiaries, whilst still **maintaining** a high level of quality and impact. With the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis and more severe economic threats than expected, resulting in many families finding themselves at risk of poverty, many in our community who were previously able to manage found themselves struggling, isolated and unable to afford trips, visits and other positive activities. We succeeded in expanding the provision to offer activities for everyone.



What Makes Nova Different: The "Nova Way"

We do not treat people as problems to be managed. We treat people as humans—with dignity, warmth, and high expectations—then provide the tools and relationships that make progress possible.

Our offer is both:

1. Frontline, practical, and aspirational support (stability + pathways)
2. Social change work that challenges the structural drivers of inequality

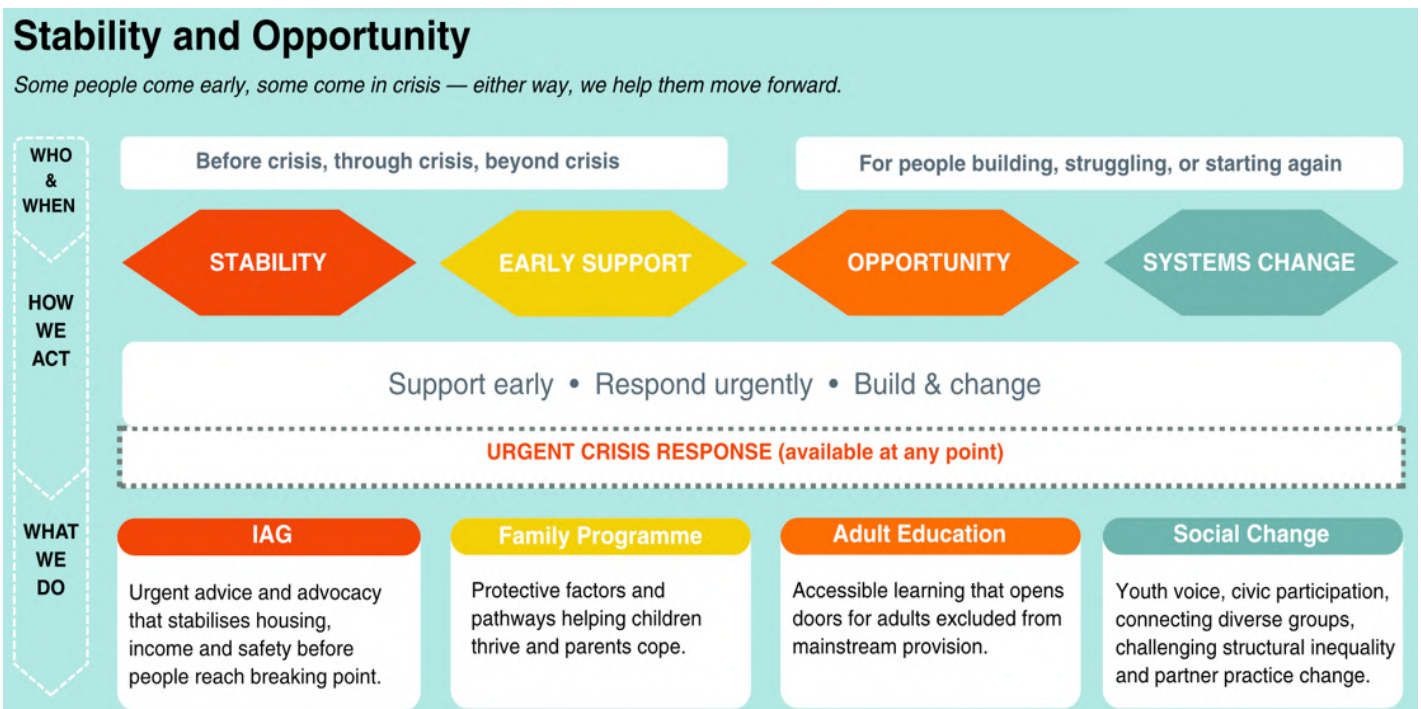
Outcomes vs. Impact: How Change Happens at Nova

A Clear Distinction

Outcomes are the measurable changes for individuals and families: skills gained, stability achieved, confidence improved, reduced isolation. *Impact* is the wider, longer-term effect: reduced harm, improved life chances, stronger communities, and institutional practices that become more inclusive.

Nova's distinctive impact comes from doing both:

1. Frontline outcomes at scale
2. Social change work that shifts the conditions around people





Our Theory of Change

If we treat people with dignity and respect, listen deeply, and set high expectations, people who have been locked out of opportunity can rebuild stability and progress. We do this through:

- Practical stabilisation (especially via IAG): resolving immediate barriers that block safety, housing, and functioning
- Skill-building and confidence-building (education and family learning): the capabilities people need to navigate systems and seize opportunity
- Belonging and connection: reducing isolation and strengthening community ties
- Relentless learning culture: not "growth for growth's sake," but continuous improvement based on what works and what we hear
- Structural change: we recognise individual effort must be backed by institutional change—hence our social change work with partners and civic participation

“ Nova has given me the confidence to step up, speak out and believe that I can help shape the world around me. — **Young person, aged 14**

“ Nova is the best way to connect with your community. We are deeply grateful to Nova for all the help and support over these years. You have truly witnessed our growth and development. For us, Nova represents a safe place where we can share our concerns without feeling judged. It has been, and continues to be, a very important pillar for our family since our arrival in this city. – **Parent, Family Programme**



Focus Group, February 2026

Participants highlight the **human relationships** behind Nova’s support. Staff remember names, follow up, and make people feel valued rather than processed.

Key elements include:

- Warm welcome
- Personal knowledge of families
- Continuity of support
- Non-judgemental help
- Open-door culture

This reflects a **strong trauma-informed approach** centred on trust and care.



Information, Advice & Guidance





IAG

Urgent, Practical Help + Pathways

IAG is where crisis meets systems. The programme provides a welcoming, trusting safe space with specialist advisors who initiate positive change and empowerment. Many clients view employment as an eventual goal, but now overwhelmingly need help with health, housing, finance and debt advice. The cost-of-living crisis saw services adapt to help with budgeting, grant applications, food bank referrals, home evictions and benefits. Our partnerships with Kensington & Chelsea Foundation, Nucleus (RBKC debt advice service) and Lancaster West Estate enable us to reach more people on a wider range of issues.

Why It Matters: Prevention + Crisis Response

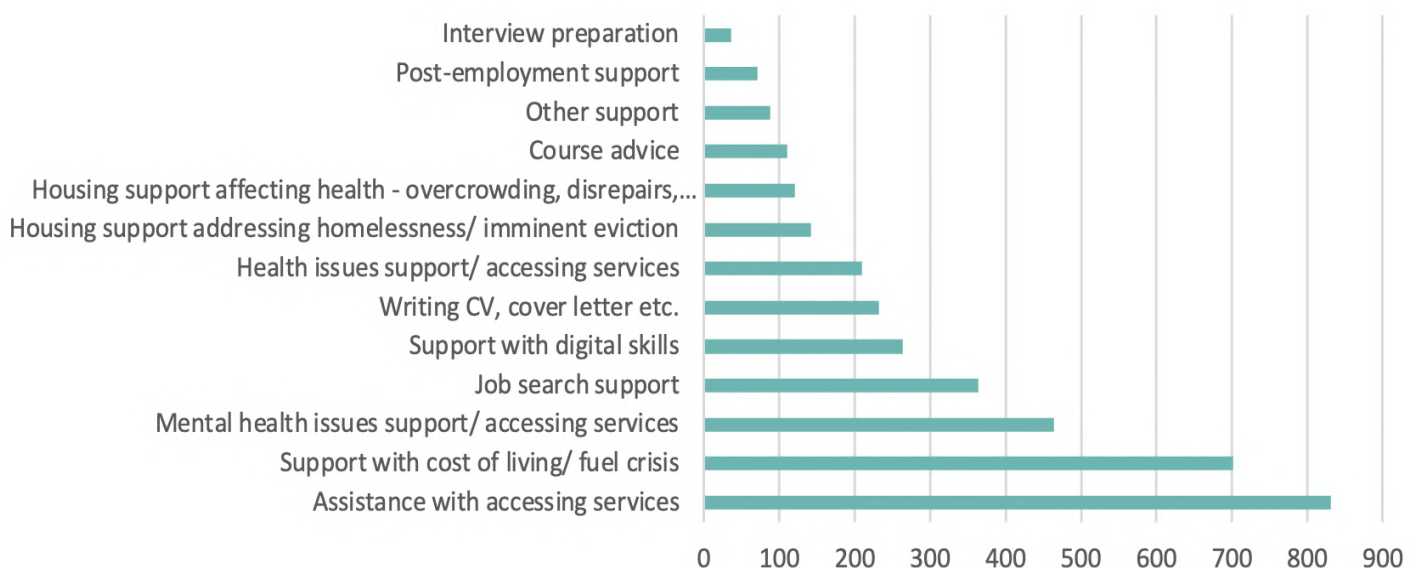
This work is often preventative. Early intervention reduces escalation into homelessness, destitution, safeguarding crisis, and acute mental distress.

Practical Support That Changes Real Life

A key part of IAG is ensuring people can access immediate practical help—for example, support with fuel poverty and emergency essentials—alongside longer-term plans.

- **616** clients supported
- **2,289** outcomes achieved including:
 - 994 external referrals
 - 341 employment-related outcomes including progression into employment (47)
 - 376 improved their financial situation including: securing grant (146), agreed debt repayment plan (89) and secured health related benefits (76)
 - 370 improved skills
 - 29 improved their living situation, including reduced risk of homelessness (10)
- **3,632** activities completed during **2,251** sessions – see below

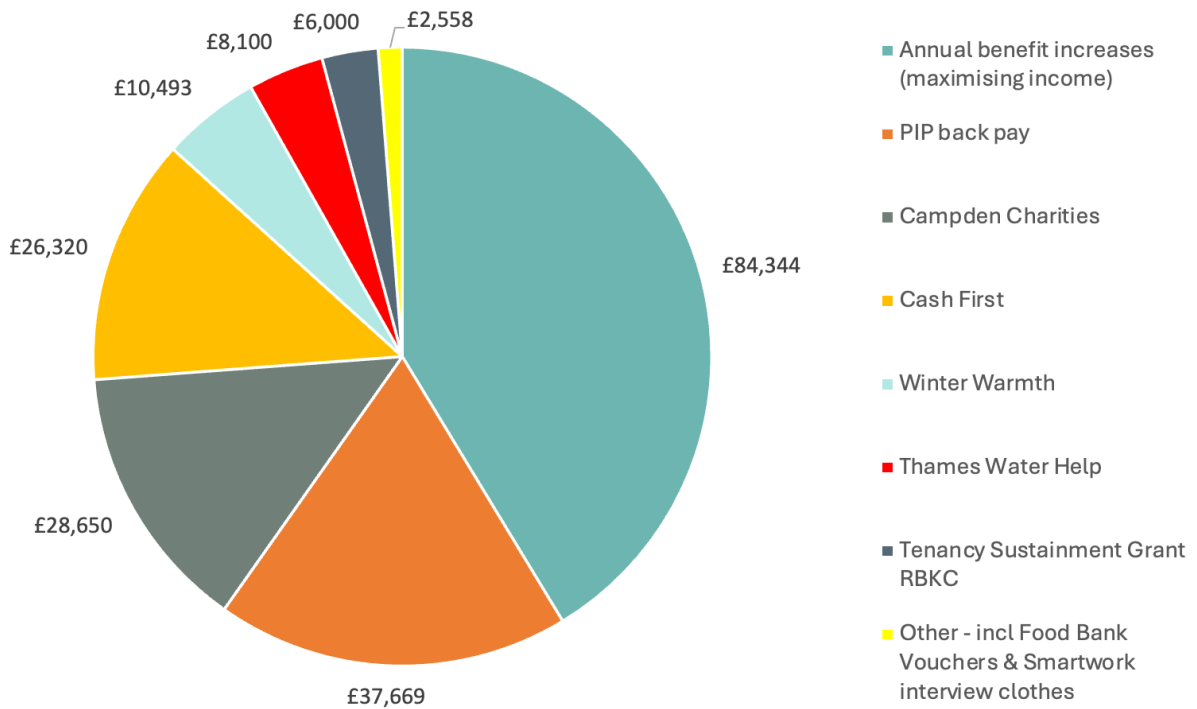
Completed activities (3,632)





The IAG team provided a **minimum £204,134** of direct financial impact in 2025 through cash-first support, charitable grants, emergency schemes, and income maximisation to clients in desperate need. Nova's staff time and trusted relationships unlock support from multiple external systems, multiplying the value generated for residents.

IAG - 2025 Direct Financial Support - £204k



“ I’d like to express my heartfelt gratitude [to Nova] for their kindness, patience and attentiveness. Their warm and considerate approach truly makes a difference, particularly during moments when one feels vulnerable or overwhelmed.

“ I arrived without an appointment in a state of desperation having just opened a letter relating to seek possession of my property, I was in such a panic...I cannot express my gratitude that I was able to access Nova and in-turn advice that had I not been able to do so. I honestly don’t know where I would have turned or what I would have done. Thank You is not enough for the help I received that day.



Focus Group, February 2026

Nova’s IAG service helps residents navigate **complex systems such as benefits, housing and council processes.**

Participants say the support:

- Reduces anxiety
- Breaks bureaucracy into manageable steps
- Builds confidence
- Provides reliable guidance

For many families, Nova offers a **safe and trusted alternative to stressful official channels.**



Adult Education





Adult Education

Rebuilding Capability for People Locked Out

At the heart of Nova’s work is an unwavering focus on education. Our Adult Education programme equips individuals, aged 19 and over, with the skills and confidence to progress towards realising their potential. Many of our adult learners face significant challenges, including limited English reading and writing skills (posing additional difficulties in accessing online support and services); no formal education beyond 18; mental health conditions or are lone parents. A large proportion are economically stressed and seeking employment or additional work to support their families. The cost-of-living crisis has amplified these challenges.

Additionally, our user base includes a substantial proportion of people with learning difficulties or disabilities (24%), migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, individuals without permanent accommodation, unemployed or working poor and low-income households. Many of our learners cannot access mainstream learning due to language barriers, trauma, unstable housing, low literacy, caring responsibilities, or digital exclusion. We provide community education as a stepping stone—the first safe place where learning feels possible again.

What Learners Achieve

Luz: Having missed a lot of school because of health problems that still make speaking and writing hard; since joining, has shown unwavering determination to building her skills and confidence.

Guojian: A learner in Go Digital! and Business Admin progressing to supporting the Go Digital! class as a volunteer; setting up the class and helping learners with common issues whilst gaining valuable soft skills.

Rehana and Nilanthi (Bakhita House referrals): Survivors rebuilding literacy, confidence, and independence after trafficking, coercion or severe insecurity.

These stories show what the data can't fully capture: learning is not just skills—it is recovery, confidence, belonging and agency.

Adult learning outcomes: progression, attendance, and achievement in 2025

- **3,781** attendances by **179** learners
- **83%** Attendance Rate, **86%** Retention Rate, and **96%** Pass Rate
- **30** courses delivered (7 accredited)
- **66** nationally recognised qualifications gained

Our courses included:

- English in the Community - First Steps
- ESOL, Digital Skills and Maths
- Ascentis Reading & Writing ESOL Skills for Life
- Stepping Stones to Functional Skills
- Functional Skills in English
- ESOL Skills for Life Employability Skills
- Introduction to Business Admin
- Go Digital! Skills Training
- Life in the UK – Values and Citizenship.
- Finding Your Voice
- Sharing Your Stories
- Mindful Living and Communication



Value for Money

Adult Education partnerships provide 169 free sessions and 377 hours of free or subsidised space/resources, valued at £14,380. Adult Education volunteers include 15 valued volunteer contributions totalling £7,842 (using valuation basis standard calculation).

Together, the attached Adult Education evidence documents at least £22,222 of added value that increases Nova's teaching reach and learner support without equivalent unrestricted spend.

Adult Education - partnership resources evidenced (2025):

Partner	Sessions	Hours	Rate used	Value
North Kensington Library	70	175	£38	£6,650
Ismaili Centre	58	116	£35	£4,060
Baseline Studios	33	66	£45	£2,970
Al Hasaniya	8	20	£35	£700
Total	169 sessions	377 hrs		£14,380

“ Nova is good. In my future I want finish my studies and go to university—to be a doctor.

“ I feel more confident to speak in English. I’m no longer afraid to start talking. I’ll try even if I’m not sure of the words. I’ve visited some places I would never have gone otherwise. I could know a lot of people. I learned that I can improve my English and start a new life here in England.

“ My English has improved tremendously. I am applying for a Teaching Assistant position. I like to meet and chat with people. Nova is the star for me.



Focus Group, February 2026

Adult learners describe Nova as **supportive, accessible and encouraging**. The environment feels more personal than larger institutions.

Learners value:

- Friendly teachers and welcoming classes
- Clear progression through levels
- Improved literacy and communication
- Greater confidence and employment opportunities

Education is linked to **real life progress and independence**.



Family Programme





Family Programme

Beyond Enrichment

The Family Programme offers support for local families with children and young people from early years to age 18. Our programme extends beyond meeting urgent needs, and we are committed to equipping our families for success in life, learning and work. The cost-of-living crisis has multiplied the challenges for those we work with, and we consistently experience extremely high demand. As basic needs become a priority, access to essential opportunities for social interaction, learning and play have been severely diminished.

What Families Gain

- Consistent, safe routines outside school hours
- Academic support
- Enrichment that broadens horizons and aspiration
- Social connection for parents in a borough that can feel divided and isolating

Over **9,600** individual attendances across our four key service areas: *Education, Holiday Activities, Termtime Activities* and our offer for *Young People*.

- **1,486** people supported (905 children/young people and 581 adults) with year-on-year retention at almost 100%.
- **930** STEM-focused education classes and sessions (Year 3-11) with over **300** pupils.
- **95%** of parents / carers rated the impact of our after-school classes as Very Good / Excellent. Pupils across all year groups and subjects demonstrated a rolling average improvement of 25% in ongoing termly test scores (latest academic year).
- **88%** of children and **86%** of parent/carers reported positive impact on health and wellbeing.
- **89%** of children and **81%** of parents/carers reported positive impact on their confidence.

For the second-year running, we were awarded **Young K&C Award for Best Work Supporting Training and Education** as well as a special mention for **Best Work Empowering Youth Voice** last year.

We develop creative ways to offer new opportunities to our families, and this year has seen the introduction of many unique, innovative and impactful positive activities. Here are the highlights:

Trips & Day Outings:

Daytrips to Camber Sands beach, Brighton, and Stubbers Outdoor Centre for climbing, kayaking, archery, and bushcraft. A gliding experience for young people at the Cambridge Gliding Centre. Trips to the Science Museum (Power Up, Wonderlab), London Zoo (SHAFari party), Tower of London, Kew Gardens, Kensington Palace, Windsor Castle, and the Lexi Cinema Summer Filmmaking School. Active sessions with Chelsea FC and an Easter Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt at Hampton Court.

Arts & Performance:

Symphonic Queen (Royal Albert Hall), *Jazz Age Cinderella* (Peacock Theatre), *Dracula* (Lyric Hammersmith), and performances at the Southbank Centre, Little Angel Theatre, and Polka Theatre. Artist-led monthly workshops at the V&A Museum to create a community quilt installation for exhibition. Easter, Ramadan, Halloween, Christmas crafts, biscuit decorating, and a jewellery-making workshop led by young people.



STEM & Science Activities:

Science workshops at the Invention Rooms (Imperial College), a Wildlife Photography workshop, and a curator tour of the Space Exhibition at the Natural History Museum. Participation in the Great Exhibition Road Festival with activities like a food science escape room and grape dissection. A Gardening Club was also run. Distribution of 80 Science Activity Packs from Imperial College and 24 children's BMX bikes from Bikeworks.

Educational & Skill Development:

English, maths, and science classes for Years 3-11, including GCSE exam support drop-in sessions. Coding courses delivered with *MAMA.Codes*, including Scratch Jr, Minecraft, and advanced Python. Reading Bridge Book Club for Year 6/7 pupils preparing for secondary school. **98% of parents** continued to rate **the quality of our teachers** as **Very Good/Excellent**, and **95% of parents** rated **the impact of our after-school classes on their children's progress at school** as **Very Good/Excellent**.

Wellbeing & Community:

Monthly mental health & wellbeing sessions for parents and young people. Two family meals hosted at Mike’s Table supper club. A consultation project with Imperial College's Mohn Centre to co-design research on smartphones and children's wellbeing.

Early Years & Literacy: Monthly Storytime sessions at the Lyceum Theatre and Little Movers sessions at the Natural History Museum for younger children.

Youth Voice & Leadership:

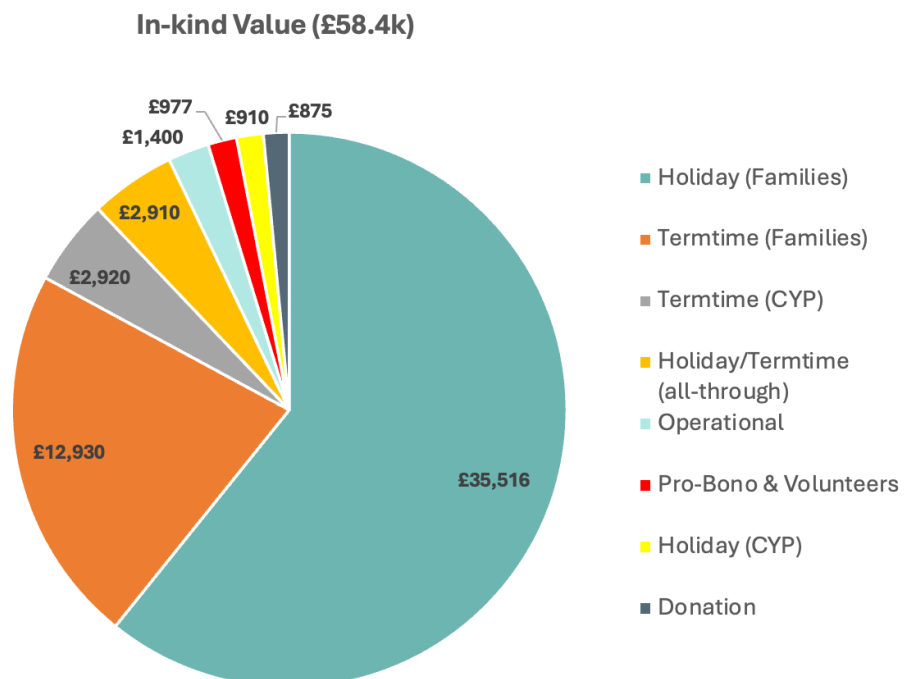
An environmental action project where young people conducted street interviews with BBC/journalist training, creating a documentary for the Natural History Museum. The documentary can be [viewed here](#). A dedicated group of young people participating in special events and activities. All Youth Group activities—including Youth Provision—attracted **135 local young people**. We delivered **53 activities altogether**.

“ More than anything, this [environmental] project showed me how powerful young voices can be when they come together for one cause to make a change. — **Youth Voice Group participant** ”

Value for Money

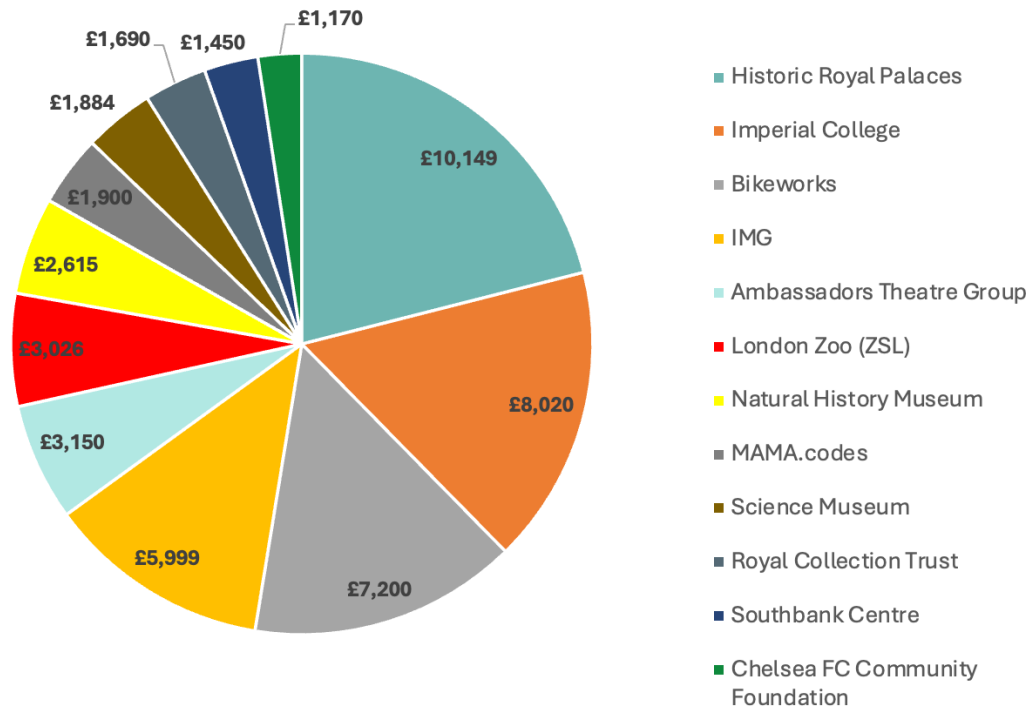
The Family Programme in-kind support log records line-item partner contributions with an evidenced total value of **£58,438** in 2025. This support helped us reach a large number of families, including over **2,000 tickets and access opportunities**, alongside **around 160 hours of workshops and project delivery**.

Together, this reflects the strength of our partnerships and how we work with others to offer more opportunities, experiences and support for children, young people and parents/carers.





Top in-kind contributors (>£1k)



“ Nova have been phenomenal for me (and my child). They are not simply a nine to five organisation. They are a passionate team who genuinely care, support, provide advice and a service that covers many concerns of our everyday life, from trips to education, from Universal Credit fears to gaining employment, socialising and connecting with others. – **Parent** ”

“ Nova is a lifeline for us. Every holiday, my children look forward to the trips and activities – it means they are happy, safe, learning and making memories. We don’t know what we would do without you. – **Parent** ”

“ Nova are amazing for what you organise and provide for us families. We appreciate you giving our children opportunities they wouldn’t be able to do due to financial restraints, all children should be able to experience these things. – **Parent** ”



Focus Group, February 2026

Families experience Nova as **one connected organisation** rather than separate programmes e.g. parents and children access different services that reinforce each other. Examples include:

- Parents accessing IAG for advice while children join activities
- Families moving between programmes over time
- Learning, advice and family support connecting together

This **whole-family approach** is a key aspect.

Families describe activities as a break from daily pressures; opportunities to connect as a family; and moments of joy and relaxation. These experiences provide **emotional wellbeing and restoration**, not just recreation.



Social Change





Social Change

Shifting the Conditions Around People

Grassroots services can stabilise and create pathways—but progress is repeatedly blocked by structural issues: exclusion, discrimination, institutional barriers, and inequality. It integrates grassroots engagement across our services, ensuring community voices shape both local and wider societal initiatives and become agents of change. This holistic approach, now integrated into Adult Education, IAG and Family Programmes, builds resilience, belonging, and tangible social change.

Nova's social change strand aims to shift those conditions through:

- Bridging divides: bringing people together across social and economic boundaries
- Civic participation: building voice, knowledge, and agency
- Institutional influence: supporting major partners to become more inclusive and grounded
- Youth leadership: young people designing social action rooted in lived reality

In 2025, we built community connections, fostered civic participation, and brought together people from all walks of life to listen, learn from one another, break down barriers and create positive shared experiences.

- **389** attendees engaged across 20 events.
- **93%** reported a positive impact on their sense of community and an elevation of loneliness.
- **88%** reported a positive impact on their wellbeing.

Event Highlights:

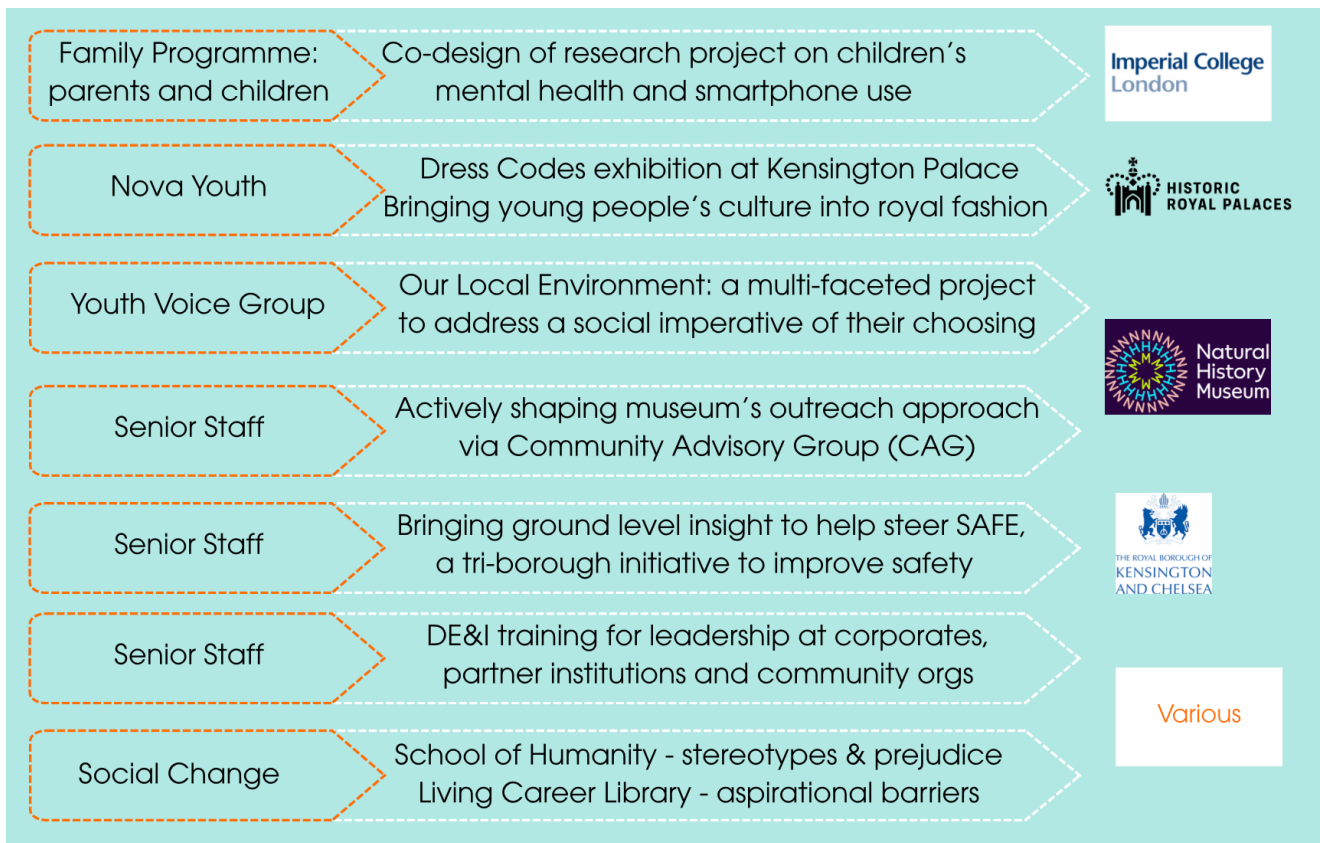
- **The Great Get Together** remains central to this mission. Alongside our flagship summer event to both promote murdered MP Jo Cox's message of unity and to commemorate Grenfell, we held our second annual **Great Winter Get Together** to combat post-holiday loneliness and isolation. Our commemoration of the Grenfell Tower tragedy's 8th anniversary was split into two events: the creation of a community artwork displayed at Nova, and a **Mini-Gr8 Get Together** at Kensington Palace with Historic Royal Palaces' Community Access Scheme, celebrating community and unity.
- We amplified community voices in research, including an upcoming project design collaboration with the **Mohn Centre for Innovation in Youth Health**. Empowering individuals as changemakers is key.
- **Living Career Library for Young Entrepreneurs**, in collaboration with Unloc, and STEM editions connected young people with professionals in green tech and robotics, fostering future skills.
- **School of Humanity** programme exemplifies a 'train the trainer' model, spreading this work organically; it has been delivered for internal partners and is being organised for Newham Council's DE&I training.
- We celebrated activism and inclusion through events like the **Walk & Talk** for International Women's Day with Iya London_Walks, honouring local women activists.



Evidence of Influence

Trustees and senior staff contribute to local partnership and advisory spaces. Nova works in ways that feed community expertise into institutions' inclusion agendas.

From frontline insight to wider change: Nova's social change pathways





Partnerships





Partnerships

Trusted Locally, Respected Nationally

Nova is not only embedded in community trust; we are also a credible partner for world-class institutions. Collaboration and partnerships power our work. We are delighted, and fortunate, to work with an incredible range of partners, from small community organizations to world-class institutions. We envisage and work together to offer our service users a bigger and better world of support, opportunities and potential.



- Little Movers - exploring how animals and humans move through storytelling, movement and hands-on making.
- Youth Voice Group collaboration at Fixing Our Broken Planet exhibition as part of *Our Local Environment* Project.



- Smartphone research project – parents/carers and young people participating in research workshops with the Mohn Centre for Children’s Health & Wellbeing helping shape future research.
- Young people’s Science workshops at Imperial’s Invention Rooms.

“ *The smartphone project was a highlight for me. I really enjoyed the workshops, where we met other people and worked in teams to share our views on young people’s use of phones and how parents manage this with their children. We were able to express our ideas openly and explore the pros and cons of phone use together. - Family Interview*

We are hugely grateful to all our partners:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Advance | • Lancaster West | • Second Home, Holland Park |
| • Ambassadors Theatre Group | • Lexi Cinema | • Smart Works |
| • Bikeworks | • Little Angel Theatre | • Southbank Centre |
| • CAA Stellar | • London Children’s Ballet | • Story Jam! |
| • Campden Charities | • Lyric Theatre | • The Garden Cinema |
| • Chelsea FC Foundation | • MAMA.codes | • The Hon. Co. of Air Pilots |
| • Community Catalysts | • Migrateful | • The Ismaili Centre |
| • Dalgarno Trust & Foodbank | • Mike’s Table | • The Jo Cox Foundation |
| • Grove Trust | • Mohn Centre | • The Lexi Cinema |
| • Henry Smith | • MOLA | • Trussell Trust |
| • Historic Royal Palaces | • Natural History Museum | • Ubuntu Pledge |
| • Hodan Somali Community | • New Wimbledon Theatre | • UNDR |
| • IMG | • NHS Grenfell Health Service | • V&A Museum |
| • Imperial College London | • North Kensington Fire Station | • Volunteer Centre K&C |
| • Imperial College Invention Rooms | • Partnership for Young London | • West London Creative |
| • Iya London Walks | • Polka Theatre | • Westminster City Lions |
| • KCS Carnival Mas Band | • Raspberry Pi Foundation | • Westway Trust |
| • Kensington & Chelsea Libraries | • Royal Albert Hall | • Young K&C |
| • Kensington And Chelsea Council | • Science Museum | • ZSL London Zoo |
| • Kensington and Chelsea Foundation | • Saatchi Gallery | |
| • Kew Gardens | • Snakes and Ladders (Soft Play) | |



Awards & Recognition





Awards and Recognition

In 2022, Nova won *Imperial’s President’s Team Award* for **Inspirational Partner Award for Excellence in Societal Engagement**,

“ We are inspired by your success and contribution to our college mission to achieve enduring excellence in research for the benefit of society.

Recognition and Local Credibility in 2025

Nova's practical, community-rooted impact has been recognised locally, including borough-level recognition for contributions to local life.



Mayor’s Awards 2025

Outstanding service to the borough in the category of Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation

“ Nova have consistently gone above and beyond in holistically supporting residents; making a profound and lasting difference in their lives, especially through their employment support programme, health and wellbeing activities...Through their compassionate, empathetic and comprehensive approach, Nova truly sets the standard for community care and support.



Young K&C Achievement Awards 2025

Winner: Best Work Supporting Training and Education

“ For fostering personal development and strengthening community ties through inclusive and varied educational activities. The panel noted that the nominations told the story of a truly holistic approach to education, supporting both the child and their wider family.



Young K&C Achievement Awards 2025

Special Mention: Best Work Empowering Youth Voice

“ Nova have worked very hard in engaging with young people in our community to work together on a project that benefits the entire community. Not only bringing young people together but also educating interactively.

These partnerships and recognitions demonstrate our delivery quality and professionalism; our ability to operate at the intersection of community need and institutional change; and that we are trusted to hold complexity and safeguard people with dignity.



Our Team





Our Team: Representation, Longevity, Professionalism

People power Nova— not just through what we do but also by how we act.

Representation and Lived Experience

Our team reflects the community we serve. Lived experience is not a slogan here; it shapes how we communicate, build trust, and design what works. Two-thirds of our senior management team started at Nova as either volunteers or service users.

Professional Excellence

We pair lived experience with high professional standards: qualified educators, skilled advisers, safeguarding competence, and a continuous-improvement culture.

Longevity and Local Legitimacy

Nova has operated for over 40 years through multiple shocks and shifts. We adapt, evolve, and protect the core: high-quality frontline services, delivered with dignity and respect.



Focus Group, February 2026

Trust is Nova’s Biggest Strength

Families consistently say they **trust Nova with their children and their futures**. Staff are described as genuine, caring and reliable, creating emotional and practical safety. In a **post-Grenfell context where many feel anxious about official systems**, Nova is often seen as a **trusted intermediary**, helping residents navigate services that might otherwise feel intimidating.

“ They have ideals and retain their integrity which gives them an edge – **Partner organisation** ”

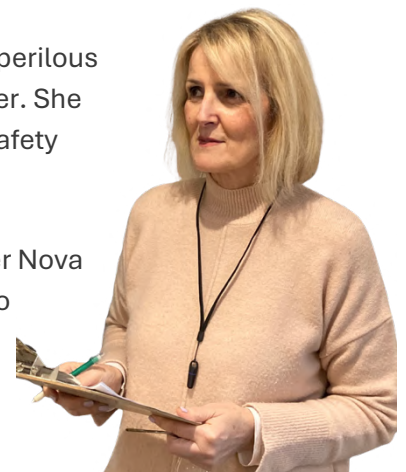
Meet Mirjana, a valued colleague at Nova whose own journey to safety from her war-torn home country is now leading her to a future focused on ensuring the safety of others. Mirjana came to Nova in 2006 after arriving in the UK as a refugee from the war in the former Yugoslavia.

In many ways, Mirjana’s story of adapting echoes Nova’s own. From being one of our first IT and English learners, she progressed to volunteering as the organisation grew to include IAG services to meet changing needs. Helping others was something Mirjana realised she had a natural talent and inclination for during the difficult years of the war. She delivered food and clothing to people held in war camps and took part in clandestine efforts to help people escape the country.

Recent years have seen Mirjana pursuing her desire to help others, albeit via less perilous means, in roles as Senior Administrator to eventually becoming our Office Manager. She continues to develop, most recently by completing a certification in operational safety management which has further strengthened her skills in this key role.

Reflecting on her journey, Mirjana says it’s the common approach that she and her Nova colleagues share which makes the difference – something that has been central to her throughout her life - what we call being ‘Nova-ish’:

“ It’s the people who help and support you to flourish. The people who offer you the opportunities when you think there are none. ”





Finances

In the 2025 **calendar year**, Nova spent **£742,162** with 89% of expenditure of staffing and only 11% on other costs. 97% of expenditure went to charitable activities (3% to governance and fundraising). Our income for the same period was £811,096 and is a mix of:

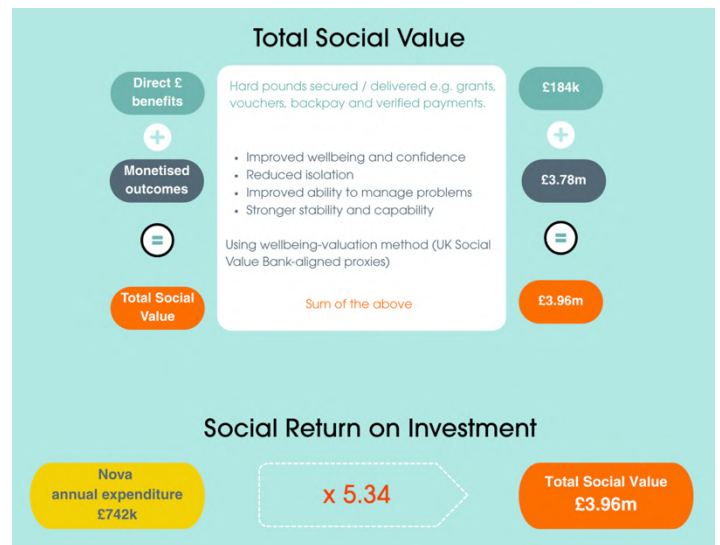
- Trusts and grants: 75%
- Statutory: 16%
- Donations and Fundraising Events: 7%
- Income Generation: 2%

Value for Money: Doing a Lot with a Little (and SROI Approach)

Nova's model is cost-effective because it is:

- Preventative: reducing escalation into crisis
- Holistic: one trusted organisation supporting multiple needs
- Trust-based: people engage earlier and more consistently
- High quality: reducing "revolving door" failure

For every £1 spent we generate **£5.34** of social value.



Challenges

Nova has taken decisive action to reduce costs and strengthen its financial position for 2026/27, reshaping the organisation onto a leaner and more sustainable footing. This has happened against a very tough backdrop for charities nationally, with NCVO describing 2025 as a year of sector-wide “big squeeze” driven by falling funding, rising costs and increasing demand, while the Charity Commission has warned of growing risks to charities’ financial resilience and a rising number operating with expenditure above income.

Against that context, Nova’s 2026/27 budget is built on a significantly reduced cost base and prudent income assumptions, with around half of income already secured and a planned return to surplus. The remaining challenge is not the viability of the organisation, but the need to rebuild reserves so that Nova has the working capital, confidence and resilience to manage uneven income, absorb delays and sustain high-quality frontline support.

Support at this point therefore has exceptional value: it helps turn a difficult period of retrenchment into a stable recovery, enabling a restructured, high-impact charity to rebuild reserves and move forward from a far stronger position



Focus Group, February 2026

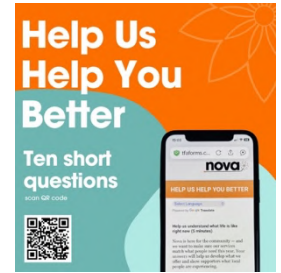
Saturation of local provision and frustration about funding allocation

Several participants criticise the number of newer organisations entering the area and duplicating work. They feel these organisations may be chasing funding trends rather than responding to real community need. In contrast, Nova is described as longstanding, grassroots, and authentic.



The Road Ahead

In preparation for 2026/27 financial year, we reached out to our service users and asked some important questions, and the key things we heard were:



Challenges people are facing

Biggest worries right now

- Money / debt: **50%**
- Housing (bills / overcrowding / homelessness risk): **47%**
- Family stress / parenting: **41%**
- Health (physical or mental): **39%**
- Food / essentials: **28%**
- Work / job searching: **23%**

Other themes: juggling work and kids; overcrowding; children's education; family overseas; war impacting family

Going without essentials

46% selected at least one essential they'd gone without in the last 3 months.

- Heating / electricity: **22%**
- Food: **16%**
- Rent / housing costs: **16%**
- Transport: **14%**
- Phone / internet: **13%**
- Medicines/health: **11%**

Barriers to taking part

- Time (work / caring): **38%**
- Childcare: **19%**
- Not the right time/day: **18%**
- Travel / cost of travel: **15%**
- Health: **16%**
- Confidence / anxiety: **11%**

Our Impact

What difference Nova makes

- Can support my children better **49%**
- More connected / less alone: **29%**
- Less stressed/more confident: **28%**
- Advice / help they couldn't get elsewhere: **28%**
- Learned skills ESOL, IT etc...**16%**
- Feel safer / more understood: **14%**
- Nova hasn't helped (yet): **5%**

Open comments repeatedly emphasize affordable / enriching children's activities and family fun.

What Nova should do more of...

- More support for children and families: **56% ****
- More events bringing different people together: **33%**
- More youth support / opportunities: **27%**
- More practical advice/support (benefits/housing etc.): **26%**
- More community connection / tackling isolation: **19%**
- More help into work: **17%**
- More learning/skills: **16%**

How important Nova is right now

- **Very important: 43%**
- **Important: 33%**
- **Essential (really rely on it): 17%**
- A little important: 8%
- Not important: 1%

Those going without essentials rate Nova slightly higher or important

** Reflects highest response rate was from our Family Programme

Survey responses show that most participants are facing greater hardship than last year, with money and debt, housing, family stress and health the biggest concerns. In this context, **Nova is seen as highly important or essential by over nine in ten respondents** and is making the biggest difference through strengthening families, reducing isolation, providing trusted advice and building confidence. People are not just describing enjoyment of activities; they are describing practical help, reduced stress, stronger parenting capacity and essential advice and support they could not get elsewhere.



Focus Group, February 2026

Need for trauma-informed, consistent staffing in youth/community provision

Participants suggest some other services lacked sensitivity, continuity and experience with traumatised children and families. They note that inconsistency and inexperienced staffing can undermine trust and engagement.



Focus Group, February 2026

Provision for older children and teenagers

Parents say some older children have “grown out” of the current offer but are not comfortable joining separate youth provision. Trauma, PTSD, anxiety, reluctance to attend alone, and a desire for trusted, familiar environments seem to be major barriers. The issue is not simply “more youth activities.” It is more specific:

- Age-appropriate
- Trauma-informed
- Relationship-based
- Trusted adults present
- Flexible enough for young people who are anxious or reluctant



Conclusion

Nova is where opportunity begins—especially for people facing the hardest barriers and the least public empathy.

As you will have seen throughout this report, we do a lot with a little and work through strong strategic partnerships to add value and provide world class opportunities.

Our work is both urgent and aspirational: we stabilise people in crisis, build skills and confidence, strengthen families, and reduce isolation while also shifting the wider conditions that keep inequality in place.

Whilst we are currently working at capacity, we will aim to strategically adapt to:

- Expand access for working parents through evening/weekend sessions and childcare support.
- Strengthen advice & advocacy on housing, debt, benefits and immigration
- Deepen youth and teen provision: activities, mentoring, skills workshops and job pathways.
- Improve booking fairness and increase capacity for oversubscribed programmes.
- Engage parents in learning opportunities to build skills via ESOL, digital, AI and employment-readiness training.

Most importantly, we fight to sustain Nova for those people for whom we exist to support.

Call to Action

If you want a high-trust, high-quality organisation that delivers frontline outcomes *and* contributes to systemic change—rooted in lived experience and strong professionalism—then partner with Nova.

Support continuity of our core delivery and help us protect the services and ethos our community relies on.

Thank you to all our amazing partners, funders and supporters.

