

Impact Report Being Local

The impact of our support in Hounslow











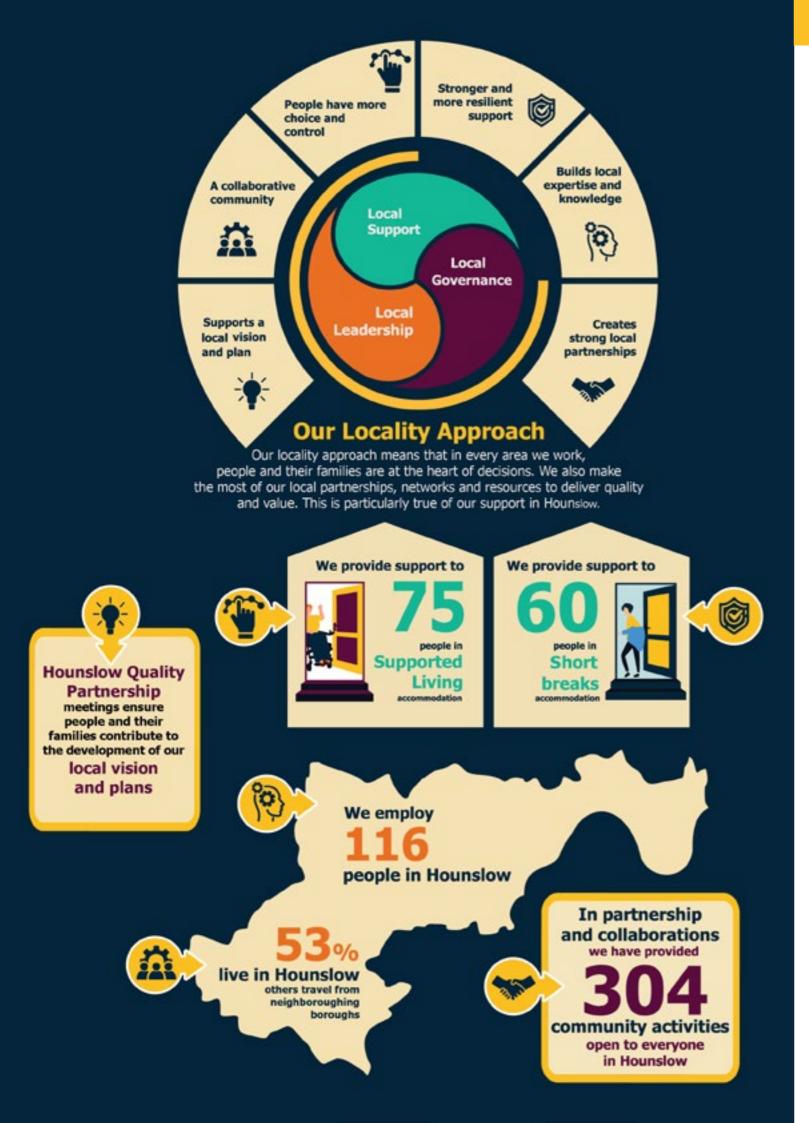




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Foreword

At Certitude we believe everyone should be able to live the life they want.

We are proud to be a leading not-for-profit social care provider, supporting over 1,000 people with learning disabilities, autistic people, and those with mental health needs to do just that.

Our 'Being Local' approach means we work alongside people in the communities that matter to them. Our decisions are based on local knowledge and know-how, so our support is personal, responsive, and focused on what matters most. Because a high percentage of our teams in Hounslow live in the same neighbourhoods, we understand local needs and work closely with commissioners and health teams to deliver the best outcomes.

Whether its tailored support for people with complex needs to our inclusive Connect and Do programme, everything we do reflects everyday life in local communities. Many of our programmes are co-produced and led by people with lived experience, helping others stay well, build confidence, and feel connected. From creative arts and gardening to inclusive football, we create chances for people to learn, grow, and thrive.

We are committed to diversity and inclusion, making sure people feel respected, heard, and valued. We build support around what matters to them - reducing isolation, improving wellbeing, and helping to create more inclusive neighbourhoods.

This also helps ease pressure on public services and brings long-term social value. This report shows the real difference our support makes. It highlights how people benefit from greater choice and control, local expertise, and stronger partnerships. The impact is not just seen in numbers, but in the stories of connection and growth.

Our work in Hounslow is a great example. We have built a wide range of trusted, high-quality support that is valued by people and their families. We have built a strong, capable local team with retention rates above the sector average, and we continue to build excellent relationships with Hounslow Council, local organisations, and community groups. Together, we are making a real difference and creating lasting impact.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our local partnerships, amplifying lived experience, and working to make an even bigger impact across London and beyond.

This is what great support looks like - and this is the difference we make.

Emma Main

Executive Director of Quality and Operations

Philomena Strollo

Operations and Community Manager (Hounslow)

Brilliant Local Support

We believe the best support is shaped by the people who experience it.

The Hounslow Quality Partnership gives people and their families a regular opportunity to talk about what matters to them and make decisions together. This reflects our updated Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework, designed to be more agile and responsive as part of our locality-based approach to quality.

We have also strengthened our commitment to Supported Living by introducing our ten 'non-negotiable' Supported Living Rights. These ensure people we support have greater choice and control in their everyday lives.

Our support in Hounslow continues to grow. We secured a new contract to support 11 people to live independently in their own flats.

Additionally, we are investing in our Respite accommodation with a new extension that will include a sensory room and quiet space for people as well as a one-bedroom apartment. By increasing our respite capacity we can provide independent support for someone in an emergency, or who has been discharged from hospital.

"I was told about The Voices Group from my support worker. I think it's useful and I like that people have listened to what I've said.

"It means we talk about the decisions that are being made together, like the community project we presented at the Certitude Innovation Roadshow."

Kirsty, member of The Voices Group, part of Hounslow Quality Partnership.







"The support provided is simply the best...it has changed my daughter's life as well as my own."

Annu, Parent

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Providing vital respite support

Certitude has a long history of providing high-quality, person-led respite care.

Available 24/7, it includes short breaks, weekend stays, evening-only care, and emergency support, often arranged within just 24 hours. It's a place where people can take a break, try something new, and connect with others, while families and carers get time to rest and recharge.

Juan has been working with Certitude for 21 years and is a manager in Hounslow, where his team offers short breaks support for up to seven people at a time.

Respite support is a bit like running a guest house, in that people will come and stay for a night or two and then return home, or sometimes longer – but it's temporary. Social services refer people to us, and we work closely with individuals and their families to provide the best support for their loved ones.

We currently have around 60 people who stay with us across the year. We are extremely flexible, respectful, and do our best to accommodate everyone's needs to help improve the whole family's quality of life. What matters most to us is that the people who stay with us feel truly at home – they feel safe, relaxed, and able to enjoy themselves. Whether it's dancing, karaoke, or simply spending time together, we tailor activities to what each person enjoys.

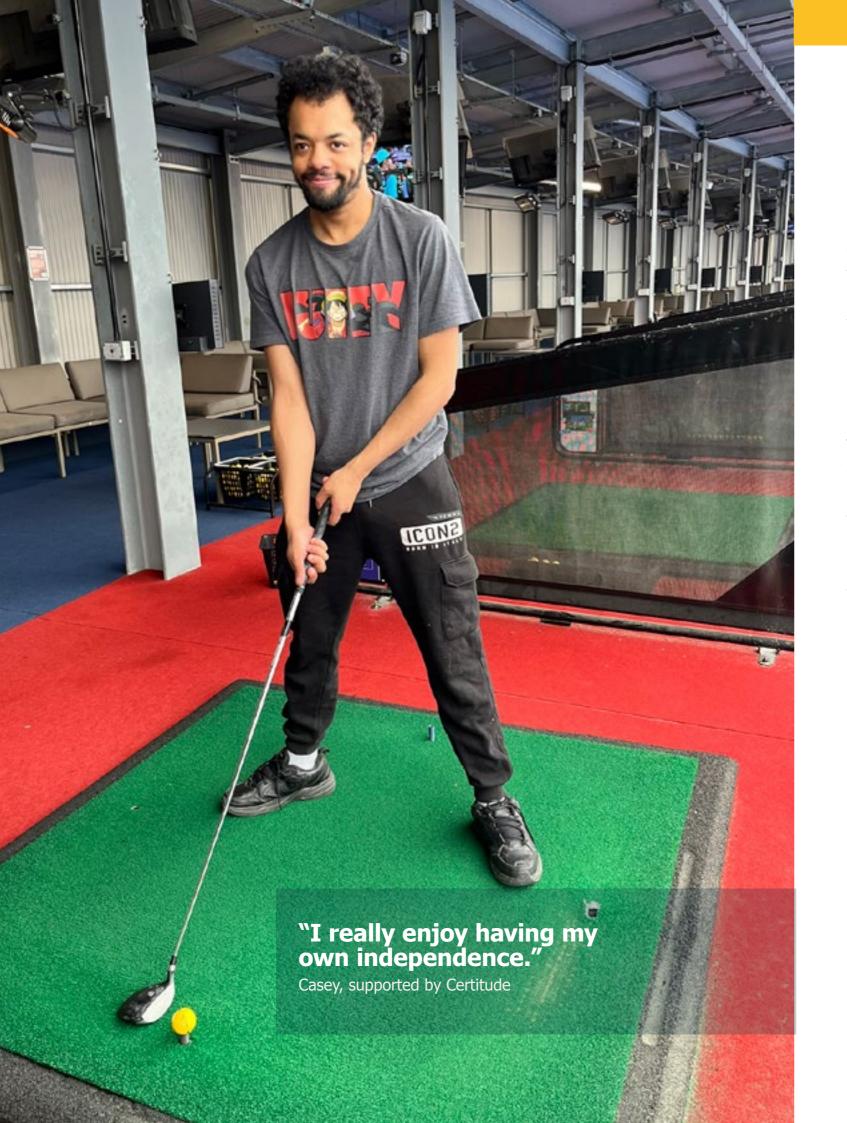
We talk to individuals and their families before people come to stay, not just to cover the basics like medication and food allergies, but to understand the things that are important to them and their interests. People will have short visits to get used to the surroundings too. It is all built around understanding the person as best we can. What makes people feel happy, anxious, excited.

We want people to feel comfortable with their stay. We also work closely with families, sharing daily updates so they can see how their loved ones are doing. Daily communication also helps us to quickly adjust support plans, where necessary, to ensure people get the right support at the right time.

As well as our Good rating with CQC, and the kind comments that families have made about the impact on their lives, we've also seen that over time people who visit us regularly become more settled. It shows that we're helping families feel more confident and comfortable taking the respite they need.

We are also here when life gets tough, giving someone an emergency place to stay when they need it most. By having a break from their usual home life, you can see their confidence grow in a supportive environment. We're providing an opportunity to have a different experience, feel more comfortable, and build trust with people. The impact of that is huge and knowing we're supporting people whilst they're choosing the things that matters most in their life is truly rewarding.





Supporting Living Principles in practice

Susan and Daniela from Casey's support team talk about the impact our support approach has on developing his independence.

Casey lives in a house with seven people where he has his own tenancy and his own key. One day he would like to live on his own. As a support team, our role is to ensure that Casey has the support to progress his life, whilst doing the things that are important to him. This is about supporting aspirations as well as the day-to-day. For example, Casey wants to change his bedroom into a gaming room where he can broadcast his TikTok content.

To help him with his budgeting skills, we are encouraging him to think about what he would need and to prepare a budget by searching on the internet and gathering costs. By managing his own finances, Casey moves closer to living more independently. Casey moved to the house five years ago, and with each step towards greater independence, his confidence has grown a lot.

A real turning point came when he started modelling in 2023 and surprised himself with what he could do. As well as going to college, he spends a lot of time with his friends, going out and staying overnight. He also does his own shopping and cooking and has learnt how to bake too. He has a lot of hobbies and interests – biking, golf, gaming – and he still likes to model. We're often taken aback by the amount of stuff that he does, and he will talk so passionately about the things that interest him.

It's really rewarding to see the impact of our work over the years, how it has changed his life, and the number of new things he is willing to try out. He is now relaxed and confident and understands more about his ambitions in life.

"I like that I'm supported to choose the things I do, like going out with friends, riding on a dirt bike, doing a bit of golf, chilling with my mum at her house, or going to the trampoline park. My favourite thing is gaming or dancing on TikTok.

"I go to college too. I used to do bakery, and I worked in a café. I also did a bit of modelling a couple of years ago, which included a photoshoot for the Certitude website. I'm now doing drama, and I enjoy acting but my real passion is to develop my modelling and dancing.

"I've been dancing on live stream for many years; I create videos and have over 6.3k followers with 42k likes. I want to continue to grow my following and see what happens next."



Strong and Capable Organisation

We have launched our new Ways of Working Principles, co-produced to ensure that as we grow, we stay focused on making a meaningful difference to the lives of people we support and their families.

We also continue to build the expertise of our locality teams, including targeted training and development for our borough-based Subject Matter Experts' programme. In Hounslow, this has meant working closely with commissioners and funders in Hounslow to create dedicated Positive Behaviour Support roles and further embed our Community Connector role.

The ongoing investment in our Hounslow colleagues is making a real difference – this

is reflected in our Hounslow retention rates which are 4% higher than our organisational average which is already 16% above the sector average.

Since launching our new online Learning
Academy, we have expanded opportunities
for colleagues to grow their skills, confidence,
and qualifications. In Hounslow colleagues
have undertaken a wide range of diplomas
and apprenticeships including Levels 2
and 3 in Health and Social Care, a Level 3
Apprenticeship and Level 5 Management
Qualifications. This is alongside ongoing job
specific development and training which is
provided dependent on the needs of the
people being supported in the local area.



"For me, it's just a privilege to support Martin and Yvette in making amazing memories together."

Janine, Certitude Manager

We asked Martin and Yvette which memory they've enjoyed most since marrying two years ago...



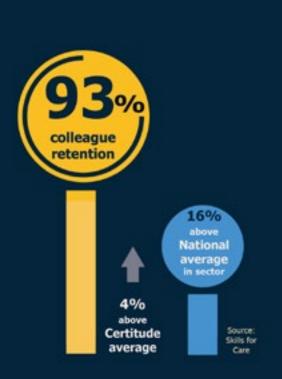
"My favourite trip was the wine tasting."

Yvette

"I like fine dining, with proper waiter service."

Martir

We continue to invest in the development of our colleagues' skills and knowledge in Hounslow:





Embedding best practice in Positive Behaviour Support

Lizzie is our Positive Behaviour Support specialist who works, as part of a new contract, alongside a dedicated support team in Hounslow, providing best practice in Positive Behaviour Support.

I joined Certitude's Specialist Support Team in November 2021 as the Positive Behaviour Support Lead, providing advice, resources and training to colleagues in Total Communication Approaches - supporting people to express themselves through everything from facial expressions and gestures to signs, sounds, symbols, pictures, and electronic aids. This supports people in developing more positive behavioural patterns, because when their communications are understood, they feel happy and safe and empowered to do the things they enjoy which improves people's quality of life.

To have a dedicated role like this built into a Supported Living Contract ensures consistency in the way we interact and communicate, which also helps us build trust and understanding with the people we support and their families. It takes time and we're in the early stages, but we're already starting to see positive changes for people.

When one person found changes in their support difficult, we worked together as a team to find different ways to build understanding that helped calm situations and provided him with more choice and control in his life. When he told us he wanted a job, we supported him to find a role that helped

him feel valued. He's now happier in his living situation and talks more about the things that interest and excite him, like going to the cricket and visiting Comic Con.

This approach helps the team to stay proactive in supporting people to live independently and do the things that they enjoy – whether that's cooking, enjoying trips out, spending time with family and friends, working, or training. It's about understanding the different ways people communicate as well as the different things people enjoy, for example, one person we support enjoys going to battle re-enactments. It's person-centred, because people are varied in their interests.

Already the team are eager to grow and develop their skills, often talking to me about training to gain a better understanding about positive behaviour support. My long-term vision is to build on our existing training and webinars, to develop a Certitude Positive Behaviour Network across all our localities for colleagues to share their knowledge and experiences and further embed best practice.



Building strong community connections

Anita works as a Community Connector, a community-based role focused on building connections, networks, and community partnerships that sustain local community inclusion and independence.

My role is unique to Hounslow. You can't do this from an office. It's about being out there, knowing what is going on in the community, networking with other groups and organisations, and finding ways to collaborate. Eventually, people start to bring ideas that you can work on together, like our longstanding Art Group which we co-host with C-Change West London, an organisation dedicated to providing accessible local activities.

What started as occasional sessions has now become a trusted and valued part of the community's week. In Hounslow, the people we support now have access to far more than what traditional day centres typically offer. Unlike conventional centres which are often closed door and limited to referrals, we've co-created a programme with the community that is bespoke to people's interests and shaped by people who use it. Today we offer a wide range of inclusive activities in local spaces, from gardening and art to pottery, walking, cooking and more. These are open to everyone, which is not only more inclusive, but means people can make their own choices about how and where they spend their time and who they spend it with.

We're also helping people to stay connected to training and work by building strong links with local employers and adult education providers. Our regular travel training sessions support people to be more independent, and we collaborate with specialist organisations to run initiatives like our Job Club or digital sessions focused on using IT and smart phones. We also lead the Safe Places project, working with the local shops, libraries, cafes, libraries and community centres to create safe spaces where people can get help if they are feeling anxious, scared, or at risk while out and about. Not only does this build awareness in the local community but plays a vital role in promoting independence and confidence for the people we support.

Our longest-running project is the Tuesday
Art group, which has become a wellestablished part of the local community. We've
collaborated with C-Change West London for
many years, and now other organisations
have joined the group to share information
about local initiatives, helping raise awareness
of what's happening in the area. The
environment is welcoming, so people feel very
comfortable asking for support with everyday
issues whether it is helping to fill in a form or
advice on dealing with damp in their flat. So,
while we might be there doing art, we're also
signposting people to local help and support.

Our allotment project, Blooming Marvellous, has become a vibrant hub for the local community. Every Wednesday, we welcome a group of regulars, but we are often joined by visiting groups from the local nursery, community police, or children from the local

school. It has a great community feel to it.
The Council gave us the space completely
free, and thanks to funding and donations
we were able to get a shed, tools, gardening
supplies, and seeds.

And it's still growing! We recently started collaborating with 'Inclusive Joyful Activities Hounslow' for our monthly social events where

people get together at a disco, have fun, make friends, and build relationships.

Taking a community-led approach means bringing people together - across all age groups and abilities. My role is to keep building those connections so that the people we support have real choice and access to a wide range of activities on their doorstep.

"Your dedication to partnership working has strengthened local bonds and helped create a more inclusive, empowered, and united community."

C-Change West London on Certitude's Community Award

Anita is pictured below (left) after collecting the community award with Mathew and Lisa







Our Community Partnerships

Building lasting partnerships is at the heart of our community engagement. Our partners and funders in Hounslow include:

- C- Change West London
- Work Hounslow Skills & Employment Team
- Hounslow Adult Education Meadowbank
- Middlesex Association for the Blind
- Local Businesses
- Local Police Service
- Hounslow Health Outreach Team
- Local Schools
- Local Libraries
- Community Groups

- Kilburn & Strode's Innovation for All Fund
- The Heathrow Community Trust
- Home and Dry
- Wickes
- Gardening with Disabilities Trust
- Co-op Foundation
- Morrisons Foundation
- Bupa Foundation's Green Community Grants
- London Fire Brigade
- Community Fundraisers

Local Partnerships and Community Engagement

In Hounslow, our strong relationships with our commissioners and community partners have been essential in growing our support for people.

Funding and donations from organisations including The Heathrow Community Trust, Home and Dry, Wickes, Gardening with Disabilities Trust, Co-op Foundation, Morrisons Foundation, and Bupa Foundation's Green Community Grants, have helped us grow our Blooming Marvellous Allotment project and Garden to Plate programme, bringing people together through nature, food, and community.

Thanks to funding from Kilburn & Strode's Innovation for All fund we now have Accessible Tandems which are a particular

favourite among residents in Hounslow, offering new ways to enjoy the outdoors and connect with others.

We actively engage in community networks and have long standing community partnerships and collaborations to deliver our comprehensive community support programme which includes our Job Club, training in IT, and Smart Phone Technology.

This commitment to partnership and community impact was recently recognised by the local community who voted for us to receive a Community Organisation and Partnership Award. The recognition celebrates our outstanding contribution to community wellbeing through collaboration, support, and lasting social impact.



"People love the tandems, it's become a popular way to enjoy the movement, speed as well as company - an opportunity to move in a different way, spend time together and have fun."

Joanna Watkins, Certitude Manager, Hounslow



"Certitude won an all-firm vote to be awarded its funding. Certitude's aims and values aligned with the aim of the Fund – to provide innovation for good.

"The far-reaching and long-lasting positive impact of the project is really impressive, and we are proud to be part of Certitude's work. It's been both inspirational and motivating for all of us here at Kilburn and Strode."

Caelia, Partner and Chair of the Innovation for All (IFA) fund, Kilburn and Strode



Strengthening community partnerships

Kilburn & Strode LLP are an intellectual property law firm committed to having a positive impact on the wider community. Certitude was one the recipients of Kilburn & Strode's Innovation for All fund. Special Projects Manager, Georgia, talks about the impact of our continued partnership.

As part of our corporate, social, responsibility (CSR) initiatives, every employee at Kilburn and Strode gets one day's leave each year for volunteering. Many choose to use it for team days and where possible we try to do these with organisations that have received funding from our Innovation for All (IFA) fund.

Certitude were one of our recipients of the IFA fund in 2023, securing funding for their Accessible Tandem's Project – an initiative designed to make cycling more inclusive. Shortly after the awards, we joined Certitude's Connect and Do team for our first CSR day.

Certitude's mission really resonated with our colleagues during voting, and many were eager to find out more about the charity.

A group of our paralegals and I joined a printmaking card workshop -one of the Connect and Do creative sessions open to the wider people in the community. It was a brilliant experience and really helped us understand in more detail the work that Certitude does to support such a wide range of people. Doing tactile and creative activities meant we could see firsthand how it helps people connect and develop their skills.

It felt like a truly hands-on and authentic experience. We all enjoyed it so much that we were asked by our teams if we could organise another, returning the following year to attend jewellery-making workshops. There are plans to organise another visit and we are also hoping to organise another this year.

"I really enjoyed working alongside people; it felt like being part of one big, happy community.

"A moment that particularly stood out to me was seeing how activities were thoughtfully tailored to each person... everyone looked so happy and fulfilled, and it was wonderful to be part of such a positive and supportive environment."

Maritta, Paralegal at Kilburn and Strode who attended both CSR days

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Helping people thrive through our community programme

Lisa has been attending community activities for the past year to support her independence.

Since I've been supported by Certitude, I've been able to do a lot of things that I couldn't do before. I wouldn't come out of my house, but now being out and about in my community makes me feel motivated and happy. I do most things myself and enjoy painting, doing arts and crafts like card making.

As well as the Tuesday Art Group, I go to the Blooming Marvellous community allotment, and the Hounslow walking group. I've also tried pottery and cooking in the past. Every activity is fun and I'm always making new friends.

I also enjoy helping people, like the travel buddying I'm doing. I heard about that from Anita. I enjoy traveling and I'm okay to travel alone, but one person wasn't coping on public transport because of bullying. I'm doing the buddying role to support him so that he can start travelling on his own.

"I'm really proud of what I can do now. In the future, I'm looking forward to getting my own place."





Growing confidence with training and work experience partnerships

Mathew finds the community partnerships and training help support his aspirations to find employment doing something he enjoys.

I've been coming to the Hounslow community activities on a regular basis for a good few years now. I join the art group, the community allotment, and lots of other activities and courses. I've met lots of lovely people here.

Last year I came to a workshop on positive relationships. We were practising giving compliments to each other and that's how I met Lisa. I said "you've got a nice jumper Lisa" and she said "thank you so much". We started talking and now, here we are.

I've had training and work experience with Hounslow Council and I'm hoping to get on an apprenticeship. I've always been into IT - I'm a smart guy - and now I'm a Digital Champion. I'm looking forward to getting an IT job.

"Coming here has definitely helped me feel more confident."



Being Local: our future plan

Being Local isn't just about where we work - it's about how we work.

We don't do things for people we support. We work hand in hand with them and their families.

We shape our support to fit local people's lives and communities. We trust and support our local teams to make good decisions that work for local people and their families, and we build strong local connections, so everyone feels they belong.

By staying true to these values - putting people and their families first, acting bravely, and always working together - we help people live the life they want, in the place they call home.

At Certitude we're always trying to learn and improve. Whether it's making our digital systems better, helping our leaders and managers grow, or making sure our teams feel valued, we're focused on improvement. We believe this leads to better support, quicker responses, and real results for people, their families and the communities we work in.

In our future plans, we'll keep building on what's working:

- Giving our skilled local teams the right tools, information, and leadership so they can meet the needs of each community.
- Making sure people we support, and their families have more say through Local Quality Partnerships.

We'll also keep strengthening our strategic relationships:

- Listening to and learning from commissioners and local partners to find ways to collaborate on issues that matter most to local people.
- Showing the difference we make, so others see our value and how we help.
- Using our voice to influence decisions and funding for those we support.

Our aim is simple - deliver outstanding support, build a robust organisation, and be a trusted partner. By focusing on local people, place, and partnership, we're prepared to always adapt and deliver what truly matters.

Nicholas Campbell-Watts

Executive Director of Strategy and Development



"As a commissioner, it's reassuring to see Certitude's values in inclusion and community partnerships being demonstrated in Hounslow and also to see residents are involved and have a real voice in how their support is run."

James Hearn, Hounslow Council

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