



brighton  
natural  
health  
foundation

## Annual Report 2024-25



**healthy communities, healthy city, healthy planet**

A photograph of two women in a yoga class. The woman in the foreground is shown from the side, her hands clasped in a prayer position. She has short brown hair and is wearing a dark grey long-sleeved shirt. The woman in the background is also in a prayer position, wearing a light blue striped shirt and a dark face mask. The background is dark, and there are some blurred lights and shapes.

*“It softens me,  
resets me and  
gives me strength.  
It’s what gets  
me through.”*





## what we do

We make Brighton a happier, healthier city by **providing free or low cost mindful movement classes for people facing health inequalities**. Our kind and inclusive teachers work in local communities in venues that feel safe and accessible to people.

## what is mindful movement?

Mindful movement means moving in a way that brings full attention to your body and breath in a non-judgemental way. Yoga, qigong and Pilates are all types of mindful movement.

## what we believe

**We believe wellbeing should be accessible to everyone.**

Our classes support people facing health and wellbeing barriers to reconnect with their bodies, building confidence, and finding greater calm and balance.

We are passionate about empowering communities to embrace mindful movement as a pathway to a happier, healthier life.



## meeting the need

**Health inequalities are stark and troubling in our communities.** We work with people who are often overlooked by mainstream wellbeing provision – those experiencing health inequalities, social isolation, long-term conditions, or mental health challenges. By working within community settings and in partnership with trusted local organisations, we meet people where they are, removing barriers such as cost, accessibility, and stigma.

## why mindful movement?

Mindful movement is a proven, low-cost intervention with long-term benefits – giving people the tools to manage their own health. Evidence shows that practices like yoga, tai chi, Pilates and qigong reduce chronic pain and anxiety whilst improving heart health, COPD and mobility – conditions that place a heavy burden on our communities and services.





# key achievements

Over the past year we have:

Delivered 20 different courses of mindful movement, including qigong, Pilates, yoga, and Mindful Movement sessions designed for people experiencing health inequalities, reaching around 400 people.

Ran 4 CPD sessions for teachers including: Trauma Sensitive Teaching for Mindful Movement Teachers, Mental Health Awareness, An Introduction to Yoga Therapy, Neurodiversity for Mindful Movement Teachers.

Attended or facilitated 7 taster days, introducing new participants to mindful movement in supportive and inclusive spaces reaching over 500 people.

Delivered an accredited 30 hour Community Mindful Movement Train the Trainer course to six refugees, four of whom are now sharing their learning in some capacity. Through this programme, local residents become community trainers, creating a ripple effect of support long after formal programmes end.



Brighton Yoga Foundation



## community events

We ran or co-hosted a series of community events to raise funds and awareness of our work and sharing the benefits of mindful movement throughout the city.

We reached more than 1000 people in all, including:

**Yoga on the Beach**

**Yoga Supper Club**

**Yoga and Foraging Lunch**

**Brighton Yoga Festival**





## our impact

**Our impact this year has been profound.**

**99%**

**of participants surveyed reported physical or mental health benefits from engaging in our sessions.**

Participants consistently report **reductions in pain, anxiety and isolation, improved mobility, and greater ability to self-manage long-term conditions** – benefits that continue far beyond the duration of the course.

People also valued the **sense of community and belonging** that it brought them.

*“I couldn’t believe how balanced and calm I felt after just one qigong session! The classes have really helped me feel more grounded and relaxed. Plus, they’ve done wonders for my neck, shoulder, and back pain. I find that I am better at handling everyday stress.”*

*“Regular application of what was taught during sessions helped me become more agile and sleep better.”*

*“I started attending the Pilates class at the Crew Club and found I could get out of bed, I wasn’t so depressed, enjoyed coming to the classes and as a result started the couch to 5k. It has saved my life and given me back a life with my children. The improvements in my physical, emotional and mental health have been immeasurable and invaluable.”*



*“These weekly sessions have been a lifeline for me and I have gone out with reduced stress, renewed energy and peace.”*



## partnerships

Partnerships are important to us and we work closely with the voluntary and statutory sector as well as local communities themselves.

We listen closely to local people in conjunction with grassroots organisations, health organisations and forums to find out what their needs and wishes are, resulting in classes that meet the social and health needs of the community.

Partnered with key organisations across the city, including **The Hangleton and Knoll Project, The Trust for Developing Communities, Together Co, The Carers Centre, Sussex Surplus, St Peter's Medical Centre, Adur Health Partnership, Sanctuary, Café Domenica, and The Gujarati Society** to extend our reach and impact.



We receive consistently good feedback from our partners who value our collegiate approach:

**“BNHF have been a great partner to work with, and have tailored their offers to meet the health and well-being needs in our community, we've delivered some innovative partnership work in the West of the city and continue to build on this together through regular planning, reflection and evaluation.”**

**Claire Johnson, Community Development Manager Hangleton and Knoll Project**



## the future

The NHS 10-Year Plan places a clear emphasis on prevention, early intervention, and empowering people to take charge of their own wellbeing. Our work not only helps individuals **build healthier, more resilient lives** – it also eases the growing burden on the NHS by addressing problems before they reach crisis point.

We also know that Brighton and Hove Public Health Team is prioritising preventive health, community wellbeing and reducing health inequalities across the city. Our offer is well aligned with these goals – helping deliver on their plans.

We are uniquely positioned to provide the preventative, community-centred support the future of healthcare depends on, and we look forward to expanding this impact in the year ahead.

**Thanks to all our teachers, partners and the wonderful funders who made it happen:**







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Thank you for the photos to Andreas Stradis and Jo Thorne.

Design by **@pinkcitrusdesign**