Transforming Governance Case Studies

The following document provides a series of Case Studies for participants of the Transforming Governance Programme.

**Leading and Overseeing Strategy**  
This module provides an overview of how to guide and monitor the strategic direction of an organisation. The following Case Studies provide examples of good practice across the charity sector in relation to leading on strategy and ensuring sustainability.

## **Support and Action for Women's Network**

## **Support and Action for Women’s Network (SAWN)**

## [Support and Action for Women’s Network](https://sawn.org.uk/) (SAWN) is dedicated to promoting the welfare of Black African women in Oldham. SAWN primarily focuses on first-generation immigrant Black African women and families, many of whom face challenges related to mental and physical health.

Over the years, SAWN's services have expanded to include support groups and opportunities that empower women to flourish. Collaborating with other organisations, SAWN aims to break down barriers, promote inclusivity, and give women a voice, fostering inclusion and equity.

SAWN has emerged as a leader in strategy within the context of supporting Black African women in Oldham and Greater Manchester. Situated in one of the most deprived areas of the country, SAWN has demonstrated resilience and creativity in the face of challenges, and the strategic vision led by the board encompasses growth, empowerment, and a strong commitment to the mission.

The board of Trustees at SAWN regularly works closely with the team, and focuses on progress and strategy, whilst also getting to know those who use the service itself.

***“There is also the need to focus on achieving financial stability, growing sustainably, and increasing our influence and impact. As a board, we recognise that we need to broaden our networks, recruit a greater diversity of trustees to encourage new ideas, and access centralised training and support.”***

Annette Williams, Chair of Trustees

SAWN's strategic approach includes initiatives related to mental health, wellbeing, business support, and advocacy for marginalised women, and it has significantly expanded their services to meet the growing demand. Through collaboration with various organisations and a proactive response to community needs, SAWN continues to be an instrumental force in supporting the welfare and empowerment of Black African women and their families.

[More information here](https://sawn.org.uk/)



## **Qube**

[Qube](https://qube-oca.org.uk/) **is a charity based in Oswestry in Shropshire, and is a community organisation which provides a range of services to local people, including social prescribing, accessible transport, volunteering opportunities, holiday activities for children, and a range of courses and arts activities. Qube also supports grassroots organisations to deliver their own arts and heritage projects, acting as the applicant and holding funds for unconstituted community groups.**

**Over recent years, the organisation’s services expanded rapidly, which led to a need to expand the team and generate additional income. Alongside this, the organisation faced challenges similar to the wider sector, with increased competition for funds accompanied by rising bills.**

**To support its development, Qube joined the national programme Heritage Compass, which provided guidance, mentoring and training to ensure strategic growth. As part of the programme, the Trustees worked closely with the staff team to focus on creating a robust business plan and look at strategic fundraising. This led to the creation of an expanded staff team and a clear way forward for the charity.**

***Give adequate time for strategic planning. It’s easy to put it on the back burner while you get on with the everyday tasks but it is important and when it’s done it brings big benefits; people know what is expected of them, the direction of the organisation is clearer, and new opportunities are easier to develop.***

[More information here](https://qube-oca.org.uk/)

## **Breaking BarriersBreaking Barriers: Meaningful Employment for Refugees**

[Breaking Barriers](https://breaking-barriers.co.uk/) is a charity that exists so every refugee can access meaningful employment and build a new life. It works across London, Greater Manchester, Birmingham and beyond, and provides employment advice and guidance; English and IT courses, and skills workshops, paid work placements and job opportunities.

The charity has expanded rapidly, responding quickly to a rising need. The Board spent time focusing on a future vision, coming together for an away day and setting long-term goals. Trustees engaged fully in the process, looking at their own networks to support the organisation, and carefully setting out and monitoring the future plan.

The board also ensured it had a wealth of experience, with skills in leadership and strategy as well as lived experience, and also looked at expanding the board to fill any skills gaps it had.

***The board’s leadership and support has directly impacted the success of its initial expansion into Manchester and Birmingham and made the continued expansion to other cities in the UK possible.***

[More information here](https://www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk/short-list/breaking-barriers-2/?landing=shortlist)