



The Chatty Cafe Scheme

Strategic Plan 2026–2029

This strategy sets out how The Chatty Cafe Scheme will strengthen its national reach, deepen its impact on loneliness and build a more resilient organisation over the period 2026 - 2029. It provides a clear framework for growth, partnerships, financial sustainability and volunteer development, while staying rooted in the simple power of conversation and human connection.

1. Purpose

To encourage human interaction and conversation to improve the lives of people affected by social isolation and loneliness.

2. Mission

To reduce loneliness by creating simple, welcoming opportunities for people to talk, connect and feel part of their community through a national network of volunteer-led Chatter & Natter tables.

3. Vision

A national network of conversation. We envisage a UK-wide network of Chatter & Natter tables that bring people together, reduce loneliness and strengthen social connections in communities across the country.

4. Values

1. **Connection** – We believe in the power of simple, human conversation to change how people feel.
2. **Collaboration** – We work with volunteers, venues, partners and communities to create welcoming spaces for everyone.
3. **Kindness** – We treat everyone with warmth, compassion and respect, creating environments where people feel safe and valued.



5. Strategic Priorities

- **Priority 1: Help more people feel less lonely and better connected**

Key Actions

- Deliver a national *Get Britain Chatting* moment or campaign to raise awareness of the brand and the tables.
- Increase the number and geographic spread of Chatter & Natter tables, prioritising areas with high levels of loneliness using ONS data.
- Improve visibility and promotion of tables through stronger signage, local communications and enhancements to the digital map.
- Strengthen partnerships with hospitality venues, community organisations and social prescribers to increase referrals.
- Introduce a simple, consistent way to check in with venues, volunteers and participants to improve support and engagement.

Outcome by 2029

More people across the UK will be able to find, join and benefit from a Chatter & Natter table in their local community.

- **Priority 2: Achieve sustainable financial growth through diversified income**

Key Actions

- Increase the number and quality of corporate partnerships.
- Apply for at least two grants per year to support growth and innovation.
- Monitor and refine venue membership fees to ensure fairness and sustainability.
- Develop a clear commercial offer for hospitality venues and care homes.
- Create a simple framework and tools to support local fundraising and track income.

Outcome by 2029

The organisation will be financially stronger, with a balanced mix of reliable income streams that support long-term growth and resilience.

- **Priority 3: Monitor the difference we make in people's lives**

Key Actions

- Improve how we collect, analyse and report impact data through digital tools, surveys and volunteer reporting.
- Capture consistent feedback from volunteers, venues and attendees to understand what works and where improvements are needed.
- Build a stronger evidence base demonstrating the role of Chatter & Natter tables in reducing loneliness.
- Use insights to inform decision-making, funding bids and partnership development.
- Develop a library of stories, case studies and volunteer-led videos to bring our impact to life.

Outcome by 2029

The organisation will have clear, credible evidence of its contribution to reducing loneliness, improving wellbeing and strengthening community connection.

- **Priority 4: Grow and support our volunteer base**

Key Actions

- Increase volunteer recruitment to meet rising demand for tables.
- Strengthen training, onboarding and safeguarding to ensure volunteers feel confident and prepared.
- Build regional volunteer networks and peer-support groups to reduce isolation and increase retention.
- Improve communication and recognition, including regular volunteer spotlights and celebration moments.
- Explore ways to reduce risk in a volunteer-dependent model, including café-staff-hosted tables in key areas.

Outcome by 2029

A larger, confident and well-supported volunteer community will be equipped to welcome and support thousands more people.



6. Our Ambition by 2029

By the end of this strategy period, The Chatty Cafe Scheme aims to have:

- A significantly expanded national network of Chatter & Natter tables.
- A sustainable financial model that supports long-term growth and resilience.
- A robust evidence base demonstrating our impact on loneliness and wellbeing.
- A thriving volunteer community equipped to welcome and support thousands more people.

Together, these ambitions will enable The Chatty Cafe Scheme to create more opportunities for people to talk, feel included and experience the simple but powerful benefits of human connection through Chatter & Natter tables.