

# Access and Sustainability Advice Service (ASAS)

## Strategic Plan 2025-2030



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## Executive Summary

The Access and Sustainability Advice Service (ASAS) is a free service funded by the City Bridge Foundation (CBF) and hosted by the Centre for Accessible Environments. It provides free expert guidance and advice to London's third sector, supporting them to offer more accessible and inclusive services for disabled and older people.

ASAS is now reviewing its strategic plan to align with CBF strategy. A key ambition of this strategy is embedding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) within the fabric of the organisation and its services. This objective aligns strongly with ASAS and the Centre for Accessible Environments' (CAE) vision of making the built environment more accessible for all. ASAS aim is to support London's third sector, making the capital a more connected, inclusive and accessible to place for all.

Within its strategy, CBF has pledged to "amplify the voices of London's communities." ASAS aligns with this mission by directly supporting organisations that address inequality and serve marginalised groups, creating more inclusive community centres and services. A significant part of inequality stems from the lack of accessible public spaces, affecting nearly 13.2% of disabled Londoners. The ASAS service directly addresses this issue by supporting charities in improving the accessibility of their buildings and services for all Londoners.

As of October 2023, over half (51%) of voluntary sector organisations in the UK are based in London—an estimated 24,991 (UK Civil Society Almanac 2023). It is crucial that ASAS supports those charities that don't have the funding to assess their building accessibility or have capital funding for refurbishments for greater access.

Recognising the ever-changing needs of society, ASAS remains committed to being responsive and relevant. Our strategic plan outlines key steps to expand our reach and network to London-based charities, provide training, promote inclusion, and grow the ASAS service through innovative and creative approaches. Inclusive design and accessibility will always be central to ensuring everyone can experience London without barriers.

## **About ASAS**

Established in 2005 by City Bridge Foundation, the Access and Sustainability Advice Service (ASAS) provides support to charities and not-for-profit organisations across London seeking to improve their accessibility. The service is managed on behalf of CBF by CAE.

Working in partnership with CBF, ASAS assists organisations in applying for various grants and provides free training sessions. The ASAS advisor supports charities to access grants for audits and capital grants from CBF, this funding is essential in removing barriers and advancing CBF's vision of a more connected and inclusive London that serves everyone. Eligible organisations can apply for access audit grants, which offer up to £5,000 for access audits and accessibility awareness training.

## SWOT Analysis (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats)

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Provides free support and guidance to charities with limited funding	Service awareness remains low among some stakeholders.	Expand promotional efforts through video content.	CBF'S backlog of applications due to high demand
Significant growth in engagement, with a 43% increase in new organisations served	Increased promotion via social media, the communications team, and CBF is needed.	Expand promotional efforts through case studies	Grants closed in October necessitating interim support Services.
High-impact training, with 94% positive feedback from participants	Communication between CBF and ASAS must improve to effectively promote the service.	Build on the success of bespoke training sessions and offer them across all London boroughs	Reduced inquiries in recent months, with expected increases in April/May
Expanded service reach to 26 London boroughs, a 26% increase from the previous year	Grants have been closed since October and will remain closed for 1 year. New funding framework in 2026.	Strengthen collaborations with CVS networks and local charities	Limited responses from past clients when creating case studies.
Member of COLAG, EITAG and AA	Some clients disappear after initial contact	Introduce CAE'S access panel as a resource for London charities.	Funding only has two years left



## Making an Impact

ASAS continues to make an impact through its services and initiatives below;

- expanding engagement and outreach across all London boroughs.
- Provided access awareness training on grants, equality act and disability awareness
- Collaborating with charity networks such as CVS networks, Community Action Sutton and other 3<sup>rd</sup> sector networks
- Increasing awareness of ASAS services through strategic communication efforts.
- Supporting charities in obtaining access audit grants and funding for accessibility improvements.
- Promoting evidence-based approaches to improve service delivery and impact
- Each year ASAS supports over 50 organisations to be more accessible
- Promoting ASAS through social media and at in-person events such as *Envisioning London 2035*.
- Case studies to showcase the impact of undertaking an access audit or capital works

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**“Just a quick note to say thank you for ASAS help with our City Bridge Trust submission. I’m delighted to say that we were successful... We’re very excited that we will be able to make these substantial changes to the building to improve access.”**

Edward, Poetry Society

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**“Thanks so much for your help and ASAS coming to visit us at Stoll, you made it all sound simple, as sometimes applying to these large organisations is very daunting!”**

Sheila, Stoll

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## **ASAS supporting London's 3<sup>rd</sup> sector 2025 to 2030**

### **Training and Awareness**

- Offer monthly in person and virtual training on accessibility and inclusion.
- Develop online resources and toolkits on inclusive practices.
- Advice for supporting access and inclusion whilst grant outcome is pending
- Awareness of Equality Impact assessments

### **Funding and Grant Support**

- Assist small charities in applying for access and capital grants through CBF
- Provide guidance on securing funding for inclusive refurbishments.
- Highlight case studies where successful funding improved inclusivity.
- Advice to assess building and service accessibility and recommendations
- Advice on the auditing process and understanding the report
- Offer continued support to adapt to evolving accessibility and inclusion needs.

### **Networking and Collaboration**

- Provide forums for charities to share practice or facilitate peer-to-peer mentoring among charities on inclusive best practices.
- Engage local community groups in discussions on improving inclusion.

### **Community Engagement Strategies**

- Offer guidance on using inclusive language and accessible formats for materials.
- Encourage charities to set up forums for user feedback on accessibility needs.
- Help charities co-design services with input from diverse community members.
- Promote opportunities for people with disabilities and underrepresented groups.

- Support the development of inclusive events that accommodate all community members.
- Offer CAE's Access Panel as a resource for London's charities, allowing them to bring their ideas and plans in front of a panel of London based access professionals and individuals with lived experience gaining valuable feedback.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Work with charities to track their progress in becoming more inclusive.
- Provide feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries experiences.
- ASAS reporting on impact of grants and advice

## **Next Steps**

ASAS remains dedicated to ensuring accessibility and inclusion are at the core of London's third sector.

Through continued partnerships, training, and strategic initiatives, ASAS will strengthen its impact and reach, supporting more organisations in making their spaces and services accessible to all. By supporting a culture of inclusivity and addressing key accessibility challenges, ASAS contributes to a more equitable London.

Moving forward, ASAS will continue to adapt, innovate, support an evidence base approach to uphold its mission of creating a barrier-free environment for all Londoners.

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**“ASAS have been such a tremendous help and support to me and many others I'm sure. In fact, without your support, I would not have achieved so much.”**

Neelam, Havelock Family Centre

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