



Dandelion Time Strategy 2020-25

Dandelion Time offers help to children with very challenging emotional issues, often resulting from trauma, violence or serious health difficulties in the family. Our approach is family based and creates opportunities for new beginnings and improved relationships. The service recognises the importance of being in a peaceful natural environment, absorbing children in calming hands on activities. Therapists guide families to harness the healing powers of the natural world using materials such as wood, wool and clay, to care for animals and to grow and eat healthy food thus laying down new positive memories. This helps them to discuss and explore the difficulties they are facing and enables the wider family to come together to build stronger bonds. Children grow in confidence and resilience and have achieved remarkable and long-lasting changes in their lives as a result of coming to Dandelion Time. During 2020 the charity has continued to provide these vital services to vulnerable children whose lives have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and the lockdown. Demand and need for our service has continued to grow.

The strategy sets out:

- **Our Vision and Shared Values**
- **Why are we here?**
- **Our Purpose and Strategic Aim**
- **Our Strategic Objectives**
- **Meeting Strategic Objectives**



Due to the sensitive nature of our work and the vulnerable children we support, the children pictured in this document are not our service users

We Believe

Children should grow up in a safe and nurturing environment, to feel loved and free of fear

Our Vision

To be a beacon in the provision of nature-based therapeutic approaches for vulnerable children and families

Our Task

To deliver sustainable change for vulnerable children and their families, using the healing and educational potential of the natural world.

Our Value Statements

- **Child-centred:** The child is at the heart of everything we do whilst our therapeutic approach embraces the whole family system.
- **Embedded in Nature:** Our love and connection with the natural world is the context for all we do.
- **Creativity:** Our therapeutic strength is in unlocking the innate creativity of everyone we work with.
- **Trust:** We nurture trusting relationships.
- **Inclusion:** Respect and inclusivity are central to our approach. We listen and behave with kindness and compassion in our interactions.
- **Humility:** We reflect on our practice and strive to continuously learn and improve.

Why are we here?

The Children's Commissioner [1] estimates that 2.3 million children in England are at risk from living within vulnerable family settings. Of these, 70% do not currently have access to appropriate help, leading to an increase in mental health difficulties.

Due to the current strain on welfare and mental health services, many vulnerable children are left without the guidance and support required to help prevent permanent school exclusion, family breakdown or permanent mental health challenges.

Dandelion Time offers early support for these children who have been affected by experiences of abuse, trauma and neglect. With a long history of successful engagement with children and their families, Dandelion Time generates lasting improvements many lives. It has developed a non-medical systemic therapeutic model that addresses the cycle of abuse and neglect. Children and families work experientially with the natural world and crafts to heal relationships and develop skills and confidence.

Purpose & Strategic Aim

To deliver sustainable change for vulnerable children and their families using a relational therapeutic approach and the healing potential of the natural world

Our strategic aim is to reach and make a positive impact to more children and ensure that Dandelion Time becomes a sustainable resource for local communities into the foreseeable future.

Our Strategic Objectives

To develop a detailed plan to replicate and disseminate our model effectively across the country, which will include as early steps:

- To significantly increase the number of children and families attending Dandelion Time
- To increase geographical reach across Kent and other parts of South East

- Increase dissemination of the Dandelion Time approach to professionals

Meeting our Strategic Objectives

The best method of achieving the strategic objectives is being tested through the establishment of an additional centre in a new catchment area, learning from this and developing the optimum model for further expansion.

Whilst our certificate training programme was put on hold during the Covid 19 pandemic it remains our objective to expand the training programme to underpin our expansion

Separate plans address:

1. **Therapeutic Programme** - Provide a consistent, high quality service to an increasing number of families and centres using assessment and evaluation to continually improve services.
2. **Training** - increase numbers attending and geographical reach of training programmes to ensure more children and families can be further helped in future
3. **Finance Strategy**- provide the financial infrastructure and control to support the expansion
4. **Fundraising Strategy**- Raise funds to deliver the expansion and ongoing work of the charity
5. **Communications** -Raise awareness of Dandelion Time through promotion of our work, brand and outcomes.
6. **People Strategy**-To expand human resources at a pace that retains the Dandelion Time ethos, values and high level of expertise
7. **Resources Plan**- Establish and manage existing and planned centres and provide facilities and materials to deliver programmes
8. **Governance Strategy**- Develop processes for management and governance of a multi-site provision

[\[1\]https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childhood-vulnerability-in-england-2019/?utm_source=Children%27s+Commissioner+for+England&utm_campaign=534916651b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_07_01_07_43&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5e06e44c59-534916651b-14628749](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/childhood-vulnerability-in-england-2019/?utm_source=Children%27s+Commissioner+for+England&utm_campaign=534916651b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_07_01_07_43&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5e06e44c59-534916651b-14628749)