

Birchall Strategic Plan 2021-25

Executive Summary

Foreword

Following an organisational restructure and change in CEO, and as we emerge from the COVID 19 pandemic, it felt the right time to refresh the organisation's strategy, building on the work done previously and in the acknowledgement that the pandemic has had a dramatic effect on current and future service delivery and potential strategic priorities.

Through individual and group feedback from our clients, other specialist therapeutic organisations, and research we are committed to providing the most effective Trauma Informed counselling and support services for all our clients.

The future of The Birchall Trust will be one in which we meet the needs of growing numbers of children and adults in Cumbria and Lancashire who have been subjected to sexual violence, rape, sexual abuse, trafficking, online abuse, and exploitation regardless of gender identity sexuality, ethnicity, culture, or religion

We know that approximately only 16% of sexual offences are reported to the police – in our area the true scale of offences could be as high as 6,656 per annum – meaning demand for services is outstripping supply and availability of services. We engaged with 1271 clients last year – so approximately 20% of estimated people affected by acts of sexual abuse of violence. We have a responsibility to look at how best to use our resources to meet the true demands of our clients.

The work we do has never been an easy or popular cause – indeed until recently the scale and extent of sexual abuse was often denied or underestimated. The case for a dedicated and independent local agency is stronger than ever. Our future strategy is based on consolidating the progress we have made to date and building on the foundations that we have to continue to support some of the most vulnerable and isolated people in our community.

Our Vision

At The Birchall Trust, we believe that we should live in a society that is free of sexual abuse, rape, exploitation, and sexualised violence.

Our Mission

The Birchall Trust empowers people affected by rape, sexual abuse, or sexualised violence to recover from their trauma so they can lead safe and fulfilling lives.

We cover issues including childhood abuse, child sexual exploitation, trafficking, sex workers and online abuse

We aim to meet the needs of anyone irrespective of gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, culture, or religion

Our Values

We are compassionate and respectful.

We deliver quality services

We are trusted and effective

We are inclusive and accessible

We are relevant and adaptable .

We work collaboratively

We are independent and resolute

The difference we want to see

Over the next 4 years we will focus on four key goals to make the most progress towards our overall vision



To provide high quality trauma informed services to survivors of sexual abuse, rape, and sexualised violence in an accessible way.

We will:

- ✓ Deliver accessible, quality trauma informed, solution focused services evidenced through outcomes and impact reflecting our Theory of Change
- ✓ Demonstrate that we are a provider of efficient, high-quality services by maintaining and enhancing our accredited status.
- ✓ Deliver Continuous Professional Development opportunities to our counsellors with a focus on being trauma informed and solutions focused
- ✓ Prepare compelling and convincing bids for funders that are innovative and cost effective

To develop and enhance our services to meet new and emerging needs, with the involvement of our clients

We will

- ✓ Develop a performance and lessons-learned culture that embeds rigour and constant improvement in our operating model
- ✓ Develop our Survivors 4 Survivors involvement groups to amplify their voices, to capture and share their experience to influence service design internally and externally
- ✓ Introduce a new Wellbeing Programme that will ensure that people are able to access support and resources designed and developed based on what people tell us they need.
- ✓ Grow our services for Children & Young people and Male Survivors.
- ✓ Recognise the growing issues around online abuse, revenge porn and stalking and raise awareness of the issues and remedies working alongside specialist advice and support agencies.

To build a strong profile and to use our experience and expertise to be a positive influence to reduce sexual abuse violence and build better services for those affected by it.

We will:

- ✓ Participate in forums and groups to effect system change which will directly benefit victims.
- ✓ Deliver an education project to work with other organisations, including corporate partners to increase their skills and knowledge when responding appropriately to survivors needs.
- ✓ Develop our use of social media and technology to reach all sections of the community
- ✓ Develop networks to share good practice and learning and identify areas for future collaboration and partnership working.

To be a strong, sustainable, and effective independent organisation.

We will:

- ✓ Have a strong and skilful Board of Trustees and work to the Small Charities governance framework
- ✓ Diversify our income streams to enable us to be resilient to change
- ✓ Recruit and retain high-quality volunteers and staff - developing learning pathways for staff, students and volunteers
- ✓ Create an innovative employment model that is responsive to change- Pursuing opportunities to pilot models of employed counsellors

Our commitment:

To our clients. We are committed to putting the needs of our clients first. We intend to continue to run a quality and responsive service that delivers positive outcomes and enables people to move on. We will resist pressure to dilute our approach or cut corners.

To our staff. Our staff and counselling team deal with highly demanding and often stressful situations on a regular basis. We aim to demonstrate best practice in our employment and management practice and ensure that staff receive quality supervision, training, and development to enable them to support our clients.

To our funders and commissioners. We want to develop a collaborative approach with the agencies that support and invest in our work. We undertake to engage with our funders and commissioners by regularly reporting back on trends and developments and working with them to shape future strategy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa Dixon".

Vanessa Dixon

CEO, April 2021