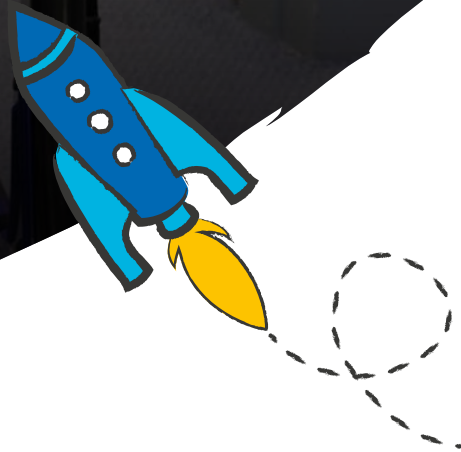




# Hope and Ambition

**Our Strategy for 2020-2025, rooted in the hopes and aspirations of the families we support.**

Working towards a time when all children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability have the opportunity to live the best life possible.



# About The Children's Trust

The Children's Trust is the UK's leading charity for children with brain injury. Every year we support thousands of children and families right across the country.

We provide the following services for children:

- neurorehabilitation following an acquired brain or spinal injury
- step down services for children with complex health needs from hospital to home, including children with long term ventilation and tracheostomies
- short breaks, camps and clubs for children with complex health needs
- day and residential placements (up to 52 weeks a year) for children with complex neurodisability and a nursery at The Children's Trust School
- clinical support for children with brain injuries and their families across the UK through our Brain Injury Community Service
- information and support via the Brain Injury Hub website and books and publications.



# Foreword

## Working towards a time when all children and young people with brain injury have the opportunity to live the best life possible.

We are delighted to share our Strategy for 2020-2025: **Hope and Ambition**. This exciting new Strategy will set us on a path of growth so that we can reach and support many more children with brain injury and neurodisability.

We have built on the firm foundations that we established in our last Strategy: Creating Futures Together. Our focus over the last three years has been to be the best at what we do; to respond to the needs of children and young people; to ensure our services are there for children for the long term; and to scale up. We have faced some challenging times in this period, but we have successfully steered our organisation to a place of greater financial stability, clinical and organisational excellence and have maintained a relentless quest for high standards, culminating in 'Outstanding' ratings by the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted Care, and the award of the ISO 9001 quality mark.

The successful implementation of Creating Futures Together has given us the confidence to set our sights higher; to reach more children; to share our expertise more widely; to build our capacity to develop new and innovative services; to engage more supporters; to continue to gain a deeper, more evidence-based understanding of the children, young people and families that we support; to develop our employees and volunteers and to make a tangible difference to the communities in which we operate.

### ***“The Children’s Trust has been a gamechanger for my child.”*** Parent

Children and young people will always be at the heart of our work at The Children’s Trust. We include our young people in planning decisions across the charity, and indeed they, and their families, have helped us to formulate this Strategy as you will read later in this booklet. You will hear their voice loud and clear as you read about our ambitions for the future.

We lay out here our confident, bold and, what we believe will be, impactful Strategy for the next five years. We are committed to using our specialist skills to grow our services in order to help more children and to provide flexible services that can be accessed in different ways. An important part of this will be the support we provide to families. We will move to a more integrated way of working; a more holistic approach where the best knowledge, expertise and skills are assembled with the child always at the centre.

The Children’s Trust is renowned for the brain injury rehabilitation services that we provide at our national specialist centre, and for excellence in education at The Children’s Trust School, based on the same site in Tadworth. We believe there is an opportunity to integrate these services for the benefit of all children at our site. In short, to develop a world-class centre of excellence where therapy, care and education of the highest standard are offered to all of our service users.

### ***“It’s not like a hospital – it’s big and beautiful!”*** Young person

To achieve this change, we must have the courage to think big. To deliver the best outcomes for the children who come to us with highly complex health and education needs, we need to redevelop our site and, at the centre, we intend to build a new, state-of-the-art facility.

Finally, in addition to the services we offer onsite in Tadworth for children with complex brain injury and neurodisability, we have a huge ambition to support every child in the UK with a brain injury. We don’t say this lightly – we know there are thousands of children who are currently not receiving the advice and support they desperately need. Through a programme of public engagement and the continued expansion of our national Brain Injury Community Service, we will work towards developing the capacity to ensure that, in the future, they have robust, reliable information and support at the point of need. We will also develop innovative new services to help achieve our growth ambitions.

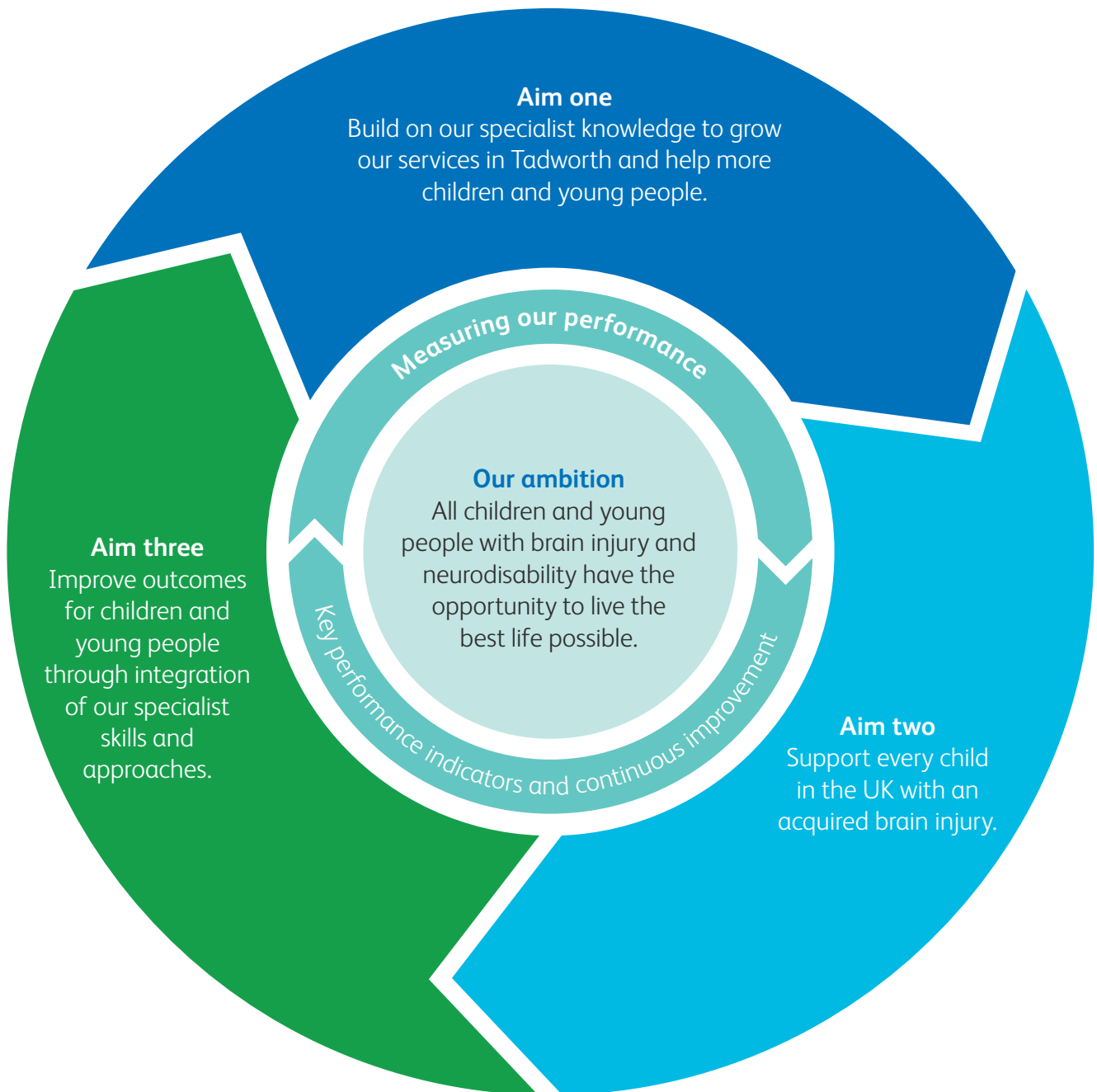
We are excited for the future. We have a united and talented workforce of staff and volunteers, working passionately to achieve our aims and ambition. We promise the children, young people and families that we support that we will do our utmost to ensure their lives are enriched and they achieve the best possible outcomes through every touchpoint and interaction with The Children’s Trust.



**Duncan Ingram, Chair of Trustees**  
**Dalton Leong, Chief Executive**

# Our Strategy for 2020-2025: Hope and Ambition

Our ambitious five-year plan, rooted in the hopes and aspirations of the families we support.



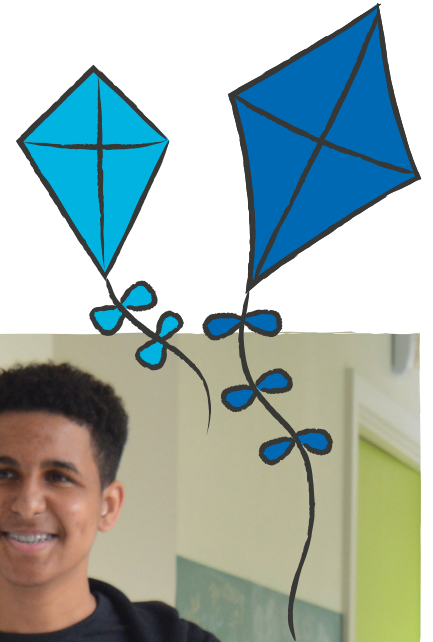
## How we work

### Building excellence

- People and culture.
- A responsible organisation.
- Adding value to our communities.
- Systems and processes.



# How we developed this Strategy



**When developing this Strategy, it was of paramount importance to us to involve those who might use our services or offer support to us. This involved face-to-face discussion groups with children, young people, commissioners and partners, which provided us with great insight and encouragement that our Strategy would meet the needs of those we support and work with.**

We then opened up consultation on our strategy more widely, by posting a survey on our website and encouraging a broader range of people to give us their thoughts and suggestions. This included supporters, other charities, staff, volunteers and community service users. We also examined 'exit surveys' and the output of 'Quality of Life' surveys conducted by specialist care workers to ensure our Strategy was focused around those activities and initiatives that would have the greatest impact on the children and young people.

This period of consultation has reaped dividends, the occasional challenge and additional ideas, which are now evident in, and run throughout, our Strategy. In fact, we have named our Strategy 'Hope and Ambition', as it reflects the hopes and aspirations of the families we spoke to, and our ambition for a better life for children affected by brain injury.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this process for helping us test and strengthen our Strategy and above all, ensure it is focused on the areas where the need is greatest.

## **How children and young people are helping us to make the right decisions at The Children's Trust**

We are committed to involving children and young people in all aspects of our work – here are some of the ways that we do this:

- we have a separate Young People's Panel to help us recruit into senior leadership roles and for Trustees
- we ask young people who use our services currently, or have used them in the past, to inspect and evaluate our services across the site
- every child leaving our service is offered an exit interview – we always ask them what we can do to improve, and listen and act on what they tell us
- young people are consulted when we develop our publications, for example Me and My Brain, our teenage guide, was produced in consultation with teenagers and features their stories throughout.



Zac beaming with pride on his last day at The Children's Trust. All children are offered an 'exit interview' when they leave to gather their views on our services.

# Aim one

Build on our specialist knowledge to grow our services in Tadworth and help more children and young people.



Jake received specialist rehabilitation services following a brain injury.



### What do we want to do?

Last year we supported 89 children who required neurorehabilitation at our national specialist centre in Tadworth. We have an ambition to grow and reach even more children. Over 33 years we have developed a specialist multi-disciplinary team who work together to give young people with highly complex neurodisability the best opportunities possible. We remain the largest centre with a national NHS England contract to provide paediatric neurorehabilitation.

### **“Have more social meetings for parents so they don’t feel isolated and lonely.”** Parent

We want to build upon our experience and expertise to continue to offer flexible services to more children despite continued funding constraints.

We will strive to continue to develop services for children with acquired brain injury and neurodisability that are not provided by the NHS. We will accomplish this by deploying our expertise in different and innovative ways.

We want to deliver research that informs service development, involving young people in our research programme and collaborating with other organisations to develop and share best practice.

### **“Do more to help parents staying at The Children’s Trust – it is hard for them.”** Young person

In short we want to maximise our skills, knowledge, facilities, experience and services to benefit more children than ever before. We acknowledge that some families find it difficult to be resident in our specialist centre and we aspire to offer families as much support as possible to enable their children to access our services.

### Why do we need to do this?

Only a very limited number of children can benefit from coming to Tadworth currently, and we have been working to reduce the length of stay for children so that they can get home as quickly as possible, which is the best outcome for them.

This creates capacity, but at the same time we are aware there continues to be significant unmet need for flexible packages in the community, for outpatients and day placements for neurorehabilitation.

### How will we do this?

Our objectives will be to:

- build the capability to identify, design and launch one new service a year for five years in order to help more children and young people
- develop a comprehensive offer for families and carers supporting those who are resident at Tadworth
- build the competencies and skills of our staff team to equip us to receive more long-term ventilation and stepdown children
- grow the number of children and young people receiving residential rehabilitation at Tadworth.

### Where do we want to be by 2025?

We want to have a sustainable service, which remains a centre of excellence, supporting more young people by offering innovative acquired brain injury and neurodisability services that are child-centred, demonstrate improved outcomes and are the best possible value for money.



Phoebe having fun in a play session during her rehab.

### What did young people and families tell us?

- *“Use more technology.”* Young person
- *“Use services in a more flexible way.”* Healthcare professional
- *“It would be good to have outpatients as then we could meet more people.”* Young person
- *“I like that it’s not like a hospital and more like a community.”* Young person
- *“Have more social meetings for parents so they don’t feel isolated and lonely.”* Parent
- *“There needs to be more holistic, long term follow-up.”* Healthcare professional

# Aim two

Support every child in the UK with an acquired brain injury.



Isaac and his mum were supported by our Brain Injury Community Service (BICS).



### What do we want to do?

It's a bold ambition, but our mission is to ensure that every child and family affected by an acquired brain injury receives good information, advice and support, wherever is appropriate and at the time of need.

This means scaling up and broadening the support we offer so that it reaches all parts of the country, developing and promoting more resources so that parents know where to find help and advice, sharing expertise with other professionals supporting children with a brain injury, and inspiring others to share our mission. Over the next five years we are aiming to understand the range of needs and challenges faced by children with an acquired brain injury and their families, and develop and verify approaches to help them live the best life possible.

### Why do we need to do this?

There are a range of clinical services and non-clinical support for children with brain injury and their families, however the scope and availability varies widely across the UK. We believe there are substantial unmet needs for children with acquired brain injury and their families, encompassing those who have not been recognised as having a brain injury, through to those who have a mild to moderate brain injury. There is no obvious place for families to go for information and support. For those with severe brain injury, ongoing support is either patchy or unavailable.

It is estimated that one child in every class in every primary school across the UK will be affected by an acquired brain injury. More needs to be done to ensure that teachers who have a child return to school after a brain injury have good understanding, information and strategies to support the child. We can help to better reintegrate children with an acquired brain injury into everyday life, whether at school, sports, leisure or work.

### How will we do this?

Our objectives will be to:

- gather evidence on need and map out regional pathways across the spectrum of severity – mild ABI through to severe ABI to identify the marketplace for our community offer
- further develop our Brain Injury Community Service and create inter-disciplinary teams in at least three locations across the UK. We will also continue to provide a remote-based assessment service that is free-to-access for all, with potential for delivering specialist assessments across the UK
- build partnerships with major trauma centres, accident and emergency units and other statutory services to create strong, coherent and integrated care pathways for children with a brain injury and their families, and create a framework for assessing the outcomes of our work in improving the life chances of the children we support

- build on the success of our Brain Injury Hub and books and publications, integrating these further with our Brain Injury Community Service
- develop an integrated approach to working with mainstream schools, linking together the clinical and information offer and Community Fundraising activities, starting with primary schools
- develop partnerships with sports bodies, employers and other organisation where we can work together to improve the opportunities and outcomes for children and young people with acquired brain injury
- build a programme that provides relevant information to concerned families and professionals and inspires the public to support our work so that we can further scale up
- create a high profile campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the support available and the needs of young people affected by brain injury.

### Where do we want to be by 2025?

We will have a comprehensive and verified model of support that could be offered to any child or young person with brain injury, or parent, carer, teacher or healthcare professional supporting someone with an acquired brain injury.

The Children's Trust will be the first point of call for reliable clinically assessed information for anyone concerned about a childhood brain injury.

We will have at least doubled the size of the number of people supporting us and will have recruited an additional 500 volunteers, with more people recognising the importance of our work in this area and choosing to support us.

By 2030, we will be supporting all children in the UK with an acquired brain injury to live the best life possible.

### What did young people and families tell us?

- *"The Children's Trust is special and specialist."* **Child**
- *"You need a way to spread what you do beyond Tadworth."* **Parent**
- *"Help parents to understand the bigger picture."* **Parent**
- *"Children might look fine but they need the support when they go to school or at other big transitions."* **Healthcare professional**
- *"Provide access to your services for as many people as possible."* **Parent**
- *"Use the facilities at Tadworth more – get the local community in."* **Parent**
- *"How about an annual fundraising day for families supported by The Children's Trust to come together at Tadworth?"* **Parent**

# Aim three

Improve outcomes for children and young people through integration of our specialist skills and approaches.



Maeva was one of the first pupils to enrol at the Nursery in 2018.



### What do we want to do?

We have had a School on our site in Tadworth since 1985. Since then, The Children's Trust School has established a reputation for educational excellence for young people with the most complex needs.

Last year, 38 children attended The Children's Trust School and 33 children attended our well-attended Nursery or parent and toddler group. Over the next five years, we aim to increase the number of children on the roll, challenging perceptions of what children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) can achieve and building on the success of our Early Years provision. We believe that education should be inclusive, and will work to offer places to children with SEN that might otherwise be unable to access quality provision.

We offer a diverse range of educational opportunities across our School and Nursery and for children and young people who are with us for brain injury rehabilitation and continuing care.

We plan to integrate education, healthcare and therapy across our services, leveraging the specialist skills of our staff and creating exciting and innovative ways for children and young people to achieve their potential. This will involve developing flexible pathways between our rehabilitation and educational services, learning outside the classroom and forging stronger links with the community and mainstream schools.

We will also commit to do more to support the whole family around the child, and will develop a 'family learning offer' to help parents understand their child's needs, involving parents in jointly planning and supporting the delivery of their child's education.

We have a unique site and want to maximise the potential that this presents for innovative learning opportunities and experiences. To achieve this, we plan to build a new facility that will provide specialist and meaningful education for all children at our site, whatever stage they have reached or level of cognition.

### Why do we need to do this?

We can provide a more inclusive and meaningful education by integrating our offer across all of our services and building closer links with the community and mainstream schools.

More flexible use of our site and the development of innovative new services will enable more children to benefit from our specialist expertise and unique curriculum.

There is increasing demand for SEN provision in the UK across all age groups and we know that some children with SEN are unable to access appropriate provision.

### How will we do this?

Our objectives will be to:

- transform our service provision for all children, from a multi-disciplinary to a transdisciplinary approach, which is family-centred and provides better outcomes for those we support
- transform our delivery model to enable flexible, personalised pathways for all children and young people
- ensure that The Children's Trust influences local, regional and national strategies and plans that may impact our service delivery
- design a new, state-of-the-art building that empowers excellence by facilitating transdisciplinary working to meet the needs of young people and their families
- develop an integrated approach to governance across Education, Health, Therapy & Care (EHTC).

**“Education doesn't have to be in a classroom.” Parent**

### Where do we want to be by 2025?

The Children's Trust will be known for its ability to deliver specialist, flexible and meaningful education, therapy and care for children and young people with complex neurodisability.

We will have built a state-of-the-art facility that offers integrated, inclusive education.

### What did young people and families tell us?

- *“The care is second to none but the whole place needs some money investing.” Parent*
- *“I'd like to see a mix of children doing things in a real context.” Parent*
- *“There needs to be an education programme for parents to help them understand their child's needs so that we can continue the work at home.” Parent*
- *“More activities for parents – but there has to be a purpose for coming in to make it worthwhile.” Parent*
- *“You could offer education to more children with complex health needs and not be limited by the curriculum.” Parent*
- *“We'd like more joint planning.” Parent*
- *“Help working parents with more flexible services.” Parent*

# Our way of working – building excellence

**Much work was done as part of our 2017-20 Strategy: Creating Futures Together to embed quality across all aspects of the organisation. We knew that by relentlessly pursuing quality, we would attract excellent people, more demand for our services and that supporters would be more inspired to support us. Most importantly, we would continue to improve outcomes for the children and young people whom we support.**

Our focus on quality was rewarded with an 'Outstanding' rating from the Care Quality Commission, an 'Outstanding' rating from Ofsted Care and a 'Good with Outstanding Leadership' rating from Ofsted Education. We were also successful in gaining the quality mark ISO 9001 assessment through CHKS, the first children's charity to achieve this.

Where to next? Where should we focus in order to sustain and embed a culture of excellence?

**We believe that to build excellence over the next strategic period, we must excel in four areas:**

1. our people and culture
2. being a responsible organisation
3. adding value to the communities in which we operate
4. developing our systems and processes.

## People and culture

At the heart of our Strategy must lie our approach to our people – how we look after, motivate and develop our employees and volunteers. The achievement of excellence in this area is the sense of being part of something that really is special.

We intend to build on existing initiatives such as our employee wellbeing initiative and employee learning and development programmes. We want to strengthen mandatory skills training for all staff and ensure that everyone understands and can feel proud of the history, charitable objectives, achievements and aspirations.

We want to strengthen the learning and development of all employees and will put in place a plan to achieve this. For those in more senior roles, we intend to develop a highly prestigious two-year leadership development programme for those who we believe have the potential to progress to the highest level of the organisation.

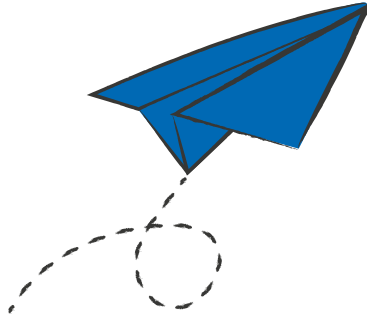
We also intend to strengthen our approach to diversity and inclusion from recruitment through to talent development and at all levels throughout the organisation.

Above all, we want to foster a culture and set of values that will help us to embrace and facilitate change and will be crucial to achieving the ambitions set out in this Strategy.

We want to strengthen the learning and development of all employees.







### **A responsible organisation**

We want to ensure that we are consistently doing the right thing – for the children and young people, for families, for our employees and volunteers, our suppliers and partners and for the environment. It is by working in this way that we demonstrate that we are building excellence.

We have achieved excellent ratings from the Care Quality Commission, the quality mark ISO 9001 and Ofsted Care and Ofsted Education, that we aim to maintain, however, we aspire to do more – ISOs for health and safety and for environmental management; Investors in People for people management.

## **We already have a robust and effective framework for risk management, audit and reporting.**

We will review and rewrite our policies to ensure they are clear, accessible and consistent. We already have a robust and effective framework for risk management, audit and reporting but will strengthen this further, and we will develop a corporate management information system underpinned by data analytics expertise. We also need to be able to demonstrate the management of an ethical supply chain and are setting up a programme to review and challenge ourselves to ensure this is the case.

## **The Children’s Trust has an important role to play in environmental stewardship.**

As an organisation whose activities have an impact on the environment, The Children’s Trust has an important role to play in environmental stewardship, and we take our social responsibilities very seriously. Our approach is two-fold:

- develop initiatives to reduced our environmental impact and champion these across the organisation
- demonstrate the effectiveness of our programmes through robust measurement and monitoring, understanding our environmental footprint and how we can improve.

Our environmental plan spells this out in more detail, but in particular we intend to focus on reuse and recycling, energy consumption, reducing carbon emissions, water management, promoting a positive, environmentally aware culture and ensuring we meet regulatory requirements.

### **Adding value to our communities**

As a significant employer in the local community with a strong presence on local high streets, it is important that we have a positive impact on the communities around us. We want to do more to improve relationships and awareness of who we are and what we do in our community.

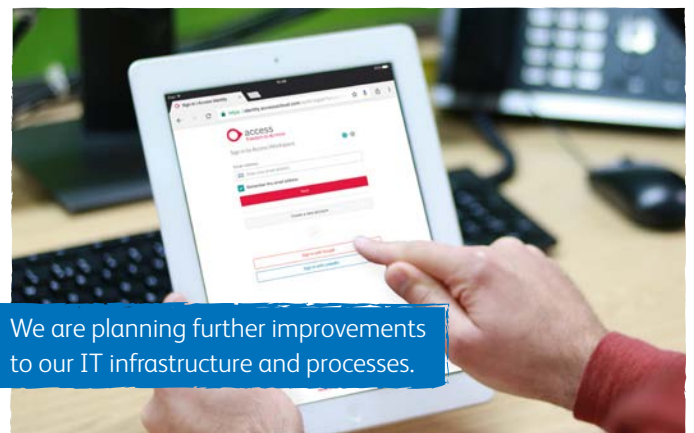
In terms of recruitment, we want to become an employer of choice, developing a deeper presence locally and reaching out to schools, universities and businesses and offering work placements, internships and placement programmes to bring business skills into our organisation and to link in with their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes.

We have a beautiful, 24-acre site in Tadworth that is an important landmark in the local community. We will be exploring ways to open up our site more broadly for the benefit for the local community, both residents and businesses.

We have 18 charity shops across the South East that have strong links with our local community, which we will encourage and build on.

### **Systems and processes**

Towards the end of our 2017-20 Strategy: Creating Futures Together, we began investing in major IT development, which will continue into the next strategic period. We have already invested over £1m in technology, including new HR, supporter database, electronic point of sale system, website and finance systems and are planning further improvements to our IT infrastructure and processes. We are confident this will give our employees and volunteers the tools they need to streamline and find new ways of working and increase efficiencies. We also intend to ensure that our processes are clear and to demonstrate 100% compliance.



**We are planning further improvements to our IT infrastructure and processes.**

# Help us make it happen



Payal watching dancers perform at our summer event.

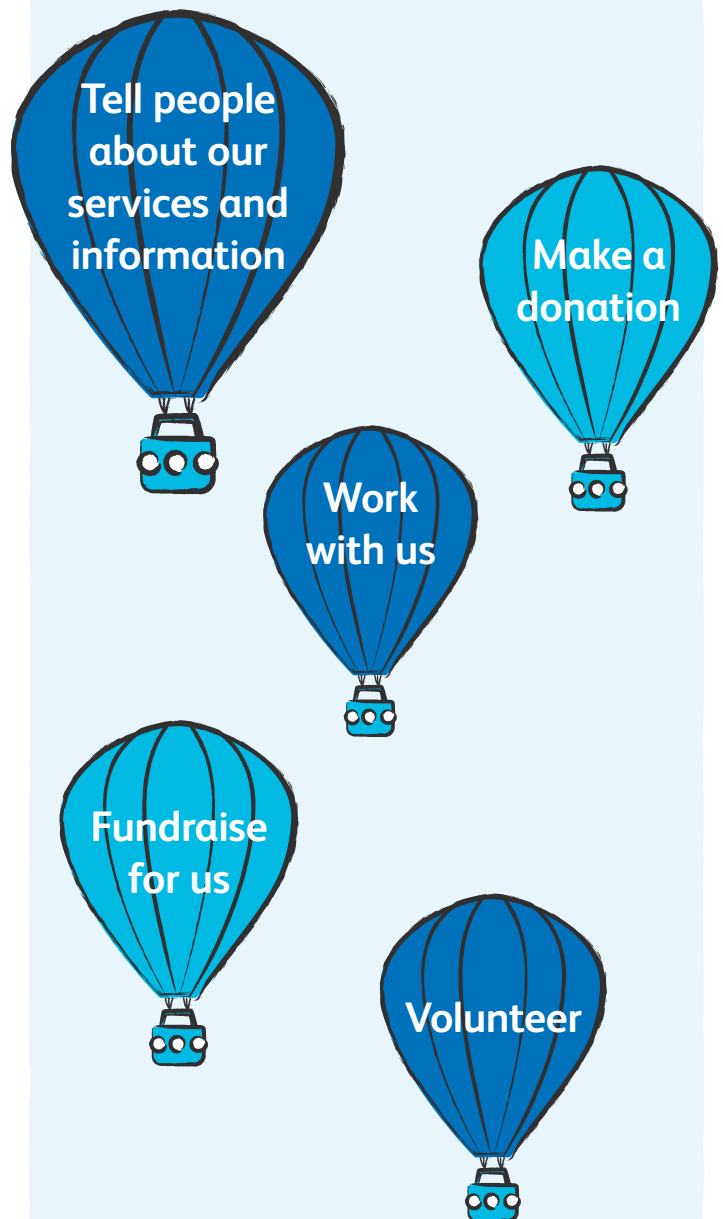
**Thank you for reading about our Hope and Ambition Strategy for the next five years. We are really excited about the possibilities that our Strategy presents and the children and young people that we will be able to reach and help.**

We can only achieve our ambitions with the help of supporters, volunteers and partners – those who share our view that all children affected by brain injury and their families deserve excellent support at the time they need it most.

To those that have helped us come this far, we say a huge and heartfelt thank you; we are always mindful of the enormous contribution you make.

If something in this Strategy has inspired you to get involved, please do contact us, we would love to talk more.

Five ways you can help us ensure that all children with brain injury and neurodisability have the opportunity to live the best life possible.



Please email:  
[enquiries@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)  
for more information. Thank you.





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