



# Ridgeline Strategy 2024-2027

**Our three-year strategy outlines our commitment to providing horticultural therapy to both existing and new gardener clients. It details our plans to sustainably develop our garden and expand our services, ensuring lasting benefits for our local community.**

## Our Mission

To offer the benefits of social and therapeutic horticulture to people experiencing poor mental or physical health and other special needs.

To enable them to recover and develop their skills, boost their confidence and self-esteem and to enjoy social communication.

## Our Vision

To optimise the use of the garden and our resources to be a local leading provider of horticultural therapy, transforming lives and communities through inclusive and sustainable practices.

## Our Values

*Collaboration* - we seek partnerships and ways of working which enhance our impact and share knowledge to promote the benefit of social and therapeutic horticulture.

*Inclusion* - we treat everyone with dignity and respect, embracing diversity we make our services accessible and welcoming to all. We value differences for enriching our work.

*Commitment to professional practice* - we strive for high standards in all aspects of our work and seek opportunities for development and self-reflection to improve our practice.

## Our Strategic Enablers

Strong professional practice.

Good governance and sustainability.

# Our Strategic Priorities

- 1 Enhance financial sustainability while retaining the focus on client gardeners who will benefit from professionally-led horticultural therapy**
- 2 Maintain and develop the garden to support the mission and any diversification and expansion**
- 3 Commit to sound professional practice and good governance**

# 1 Enhance financial sustainability while retaining the focus on client gardeners who will benefit from professionally-led horticultural therapy

## Context

In building financial sustainability, we ensure ongoing support for our client gardeners and resources to optimise their experience. We seek engagement with organisations caring for people with experience of disabilities and other special needs, as well as local referring bodies, to attract more client gardeners and maximise the use of our services and facilities.

## Action Plan

1. To keep our financial position under review, optimise expenditure and increase opportunities for income.
2. To obtain funds from grants and other activities.
3. To gain new client gardeners through active engagement with local providers and the regional network for social care.

## Success Measures

- Maintain financial reserves to cover at least 6 months of operating costs.
- Maintain at least 80% capacity across sessions based on registered client gardeners.
- Establish a new weekly session on Monday mornings in 2024 and add one other weekly session by the end of 2025.
- Pilot a new school holiday session for students in 2025 and continue this if it proves viable.
- Seek and secure grant funding each year that will bridge any gap between income and expenditure in the approved annual budget.
- Increase income from corporate bodies (e.g. through Benevity) to at least £1,000 annually.
- Increase the number of Friends and their engagement, to increase their annual cumulative donations from £2,000 to £3,000 by end of 2025.

## **2 Maintain and develop the garden to support the mission and any diversification and expansion**

### **Context**

We aim to provide a satisfying, beneficial experience for our clients, staff and volunteers by developing the garden and improving it for horticultural therapy, including for those clients who are elderly and/or less physically able and for students from special needs schools. We continue to provide opportunities for the local community to enjoy the garden through important fund-raising events such as the Plant Sale and Harvest Fete.

### **Action Plan**

1. To maintain the garden, pavilion and all equipment.
2. To implement projects that enhance the safety, attractiveness and utility of the garden.
3. To continue to develop our planting plans to support sales at our fundraising events.

### **Success Measures**

- The garden is attractive, safe and well-maintained throughout the year.
- Significant repairs are made cost-effectively and quickly.
- Positive feedback is regularly received from client gardeners, sponsors, staff and volunteers.
- Good visitor feedback and target income is achieved at fund-raising events.

# 3 Commit to sound professional practice and good governance

## Context

Effective development of Ridgeline depends on strong leadership from the Trustees, sound financial management, and good management of clients, volunteers, staff and our garden resources. This enhances the contribution made by staff and volunteers, which the Trustees consider critical to our mission.

## Action Plan

1. To ensure that lean, robust policies and procedures are in place to ensure statutory compliance and efficiency of operations.
2. To regularly review risks to ensure Ridgeline can continue to deliver its mission and is prepared to manage any extenuating circumstances.
3. To provide leadership and guidance to staff, to regularly review and monitor their engagement and performance, to acknowledge good performance, to assess development needs, and to provide support and training. To solicit their feedback to develop their roles and the management of our operations.
4. To provide support and guidance to volunteers and provide them with necessary induction and training in the implementation of new policies and procedures. To show our appreciation for their commitment and efforts and to solicit their feedback to develop their roles and the charity.
5. To build and maintain sufficient capability and capacity within the group of Trustees and Staff.

## Success Measures

- A strong profile and reputation in the local community, with care providers and with funding bodies.
- All policies and procedures are reviewed and improved at least in accordance with the required timelines.
- Staff are committed, with good records of performance and engagement.
- Sufficient volunteers are available to support each session, garden maintenance and fundraising activities.
- Maintain at least 6 Trustees and a Treasurer which, as a group, have the capability and capacity to support all strategic priorities.
- Evidence of strong financial planning and monitoring, supported by timely financial reporting, well-managed book-keeping and clear accountability.



ridgeline trust

growing together **25**

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