



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028

The Road Victims Trust

FOREWORD

The Road Victims Trust (RVT) was founded in 1995 in response to victims identifying the need for professional, holistic and therapeutic support for victims and families of serious road collisions. Originally called the Road Traffic Service under the umbrella of Victim Support (Bedfordshire), the RVT became an independent charity in 2003. From the initial focus on Bedfordshire and Luton in 2010 the RVT extended its operations into Hertfordshire and in April 2013 it further extended into Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The RVT is a registered charity committed to meeting the needs of road traffic victims and their families. Our services are focused within Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, but extends to championing the need for such support on a national basis.

Underpinning all our work is the recognition that early and continuing support is essential for people bereaved and traumatised by road traffic collisions. This support enables them to meet the emotional, practical and legal challenges facing them, to come to terms with the often-agonising changes in their personal and family circumstances, and eventually to return them to an acceptable level of functioning and well-being.

Fundamentally, therefore, the overall guiding principles of RVT have a client focus and are needs based.

The ethos of our independent charitable trust reflects the above principles. It includes a passionate determination to improve and develop our services and to raise national awareness of the issues involved following serious road collisions. Beyond this we also see an important role for the charity in our local communities, to highlight the importance of road safety activities that prevent these tragedies from happening in the future, and ensuring the victims' voice is represented in our local and national partnerships.

The RVT has a group of dedicated Trustees who work closely with the Chief Executive to set the overall mission and strategic direction of the Trust. The Trustees also monitor and evaluate our work and ensure that the requirements of the Charities Act for proper governance and accountability arrangements are in place. To meet the needs of clients of serious road traffic collisions we are structured around a small team of paid employees supported by trained Volunteers.

Our whole supportive culture has grown through collaborative partnership working. We are proud of our formal co-operative arrangements with the Collaborated Roads Policing Units across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, the three Offices of Police and Crime Commissioners, the HM Coroners, the three Strategic Road Safety Partnerships and our informal links with the Fire and Rescue Services and General Practitioners. Through these partnerships and the dedication of our staff and volunteers we are able to offer a holistic service, free at the point of delivery, to our clients.

This strategic plan contains our longer-term vision and the strategies required to achieve it. The plan sets out the RVT's three-year view and the framework of which will guide all those involved in delivering our services. It will guide us in the production of a list of annual priorities for development of the Trust which, alongside our actual service delivery, will form the basis for measuring our success each year.



Lyn Hesse
Chair of Trustees

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OUR VISION

Our vision is that everyone affected by road death and trauma receives the support they need, for as long as they need it.

We are committed to supporting the Vision Zero aims adopted by our partners across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire and welcome every step towards an end to death and suffering from road collisions. While we work with our partners towards this long-term ambition, we will continue and bring the victims' voice to those partnerships and wider into local communities where our services are offered.

Mission

We are dedicated to supporting all people who are affected by the trauma of fatal or life-changing collisions occurring across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. This will be delivered by the provision of excellent Counselling support, case management and practical and emotional support from the immediate aftermath of a collision through until a time that support is deemed no longer useful or necessary.

We will also promote a consistent road safety message by being both strategic and tactical members of the Road Safety Partnerships across our area of operation, as well as strategic representation on national Road Safety issues.

Strategic Objectives

- To improve outcomes for service users (measured using Core-10)
- To enhance our service offer to children and young people
- To ensure we have an appropriate cohort of professional Counsellors who volunteer their time and expertise to the RVT to cater to the diverse needs of road collision victims and their families
- To establish a staffing model within the RVT that enables the recruitment and retention of the best possible people to deliver our objectives
- To invest in training and development programmes for staff and volunteers to ensure the highest quality of support services and professional expertise
- To foster partnerships with the Department of Transport, Police and Crime Commissioners, Emergency Services, National Health providers and other non-governmental organisations to enable a coordinated delivery of post-collision support across the Eastern Region
- To implement and maintain robust fundraising strategies to secure financial stability and sustainability to enable the RVT to deliver its support
- To understand the importance of Social Value within the Third Sector and to review our current position in this respect
- To consider the extension of our provision, where practical and sustainable, to additional areas

OUR VISION

Vision Zero and the Safe System Approach

The partnerships across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire have all adopted Vision Zero and the Safe System as the guiding principles of their road safety strategies. This follows international best practice in managing road safety. The core principles of the Safe System are:

- That **people make mistakes**, and these mistakes should not result in death or serious injury
- That the **human body has a limited injury tolerance**, and the system should be designed to reduce collision forces so they do not result in death or serious injury
- That **responsibility for road safety is shared** between those who design, manage, build and use the roads
- That **all parts of the system need to work together** to provide layers of protection to prevent or reduce harm

The system is considered in six areas of activity which work together to provide these layers of protection to prevent or reduce harm:

- Road Safety Management
- Safe Roads and Roadsides
- Safe Speeds
- Safe Road Use
- Safe Vehicles
- Post-Crash Response

Our Role

Our role in supporting victims clearly falls within the Post-Crash Response area of activity, but our role within the road safety partnerships across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire also supports Road Safety Management. We believe there is also broader scope for the RVT to support prevention activities across other elements of the Safe System, using our unique role within local communities and the voices of victims to improve awareness and acceptability of road safety interventions being delivered by our partners.

Our clients' wellbeing and the reputation of the RVT are paramount in any activity we decide to undertake relating to prevention and extending our activities to support prevention is not intended to take away from our core purpose of supporting all people who are affected by the trauma of fatal or life-changing collisions. We believe by carefully considering ways to engage in prevention activities, we can use our unique position and expertise to enhance both the effectiveness of prevention activities and our role in communities. This would benefit our core work, building awareness of the RVT in local communities and providing opportunities for fundraising.

OUR VISION

Many local communities feel detached from decisions and the implementation of road safety interventions and there is limited understanding of why these interventions are being implemented. However, as can be seen in many policy areas, the victims' voice is a powerful influence on politicians, but also in galvanising communities to action. By sensitively engaging with local communities, the RVT is well placed to help galvanise support for wider road safety activities while at the same time building a trusted voice in the local area, and potential fundraising opportunities.

Our role in this space is, therefore, to promote and galvanise. We are not deliverers. Nor would we undertake any activity that could be to the detriment of our clients. Supporting them and their wellbeing is our primary concern and will not be compromised.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

We operate in a dynamic environment which is subject to many influences and continual change. It is recognised that irrespective of change and influences on the RVT we must:

- Respond to the identified needs of clients affected by serious road collisions
- Create an appropriate supportive environment to facilitate the grieving process
- Have sound internal processes to deliver our services
- Ensure all staff – employed and volunteers – are adequately supported, committed and motivated

Key external influences on how we operate are:

Legislation, Policy and Procedure

Current legislation leaves a relatively grey area around road traffic victims, as if there has been no road traffic offence committed they do not meet the definition of a victim under the Victims' Code. This can present challenges when it comes to victims' rights and for the RVT in accessing funding. As a result our work is more reliant on specific policies and plans set by local Police and Crime Commissioners and Road Safety Partnerships or a new national strategy in this area from the Department for Transport (this national strategy is awaited / expected at the time of preparation of this strategic plan).

In the context of these local and national policy influences, our Trustees act as a guardian of our vision, values, aims and assets, protecting the probity of the organisation and ensuring the vitality and long-term wellbeing of RVT.

Patterns of Demand

While long term trends in road traffic collisions show relatively stable seasonal patterns, their nature means there can be large variations month by month across our area of operation. The circumstances of each will also differ greatly and could result in a wide range in the number of people referred to the RVT. In turn, we cannot be certain if or when people will request our support.

Unfortunately, across the UK progress in reducing road deaths and serious injuries has stalled for more than a decade. While our main focus will always remain on supporting these victims, we recognise an important role for the charity in supporting the prevention activities of our partners and using our role in our communities to amplify those efforts.

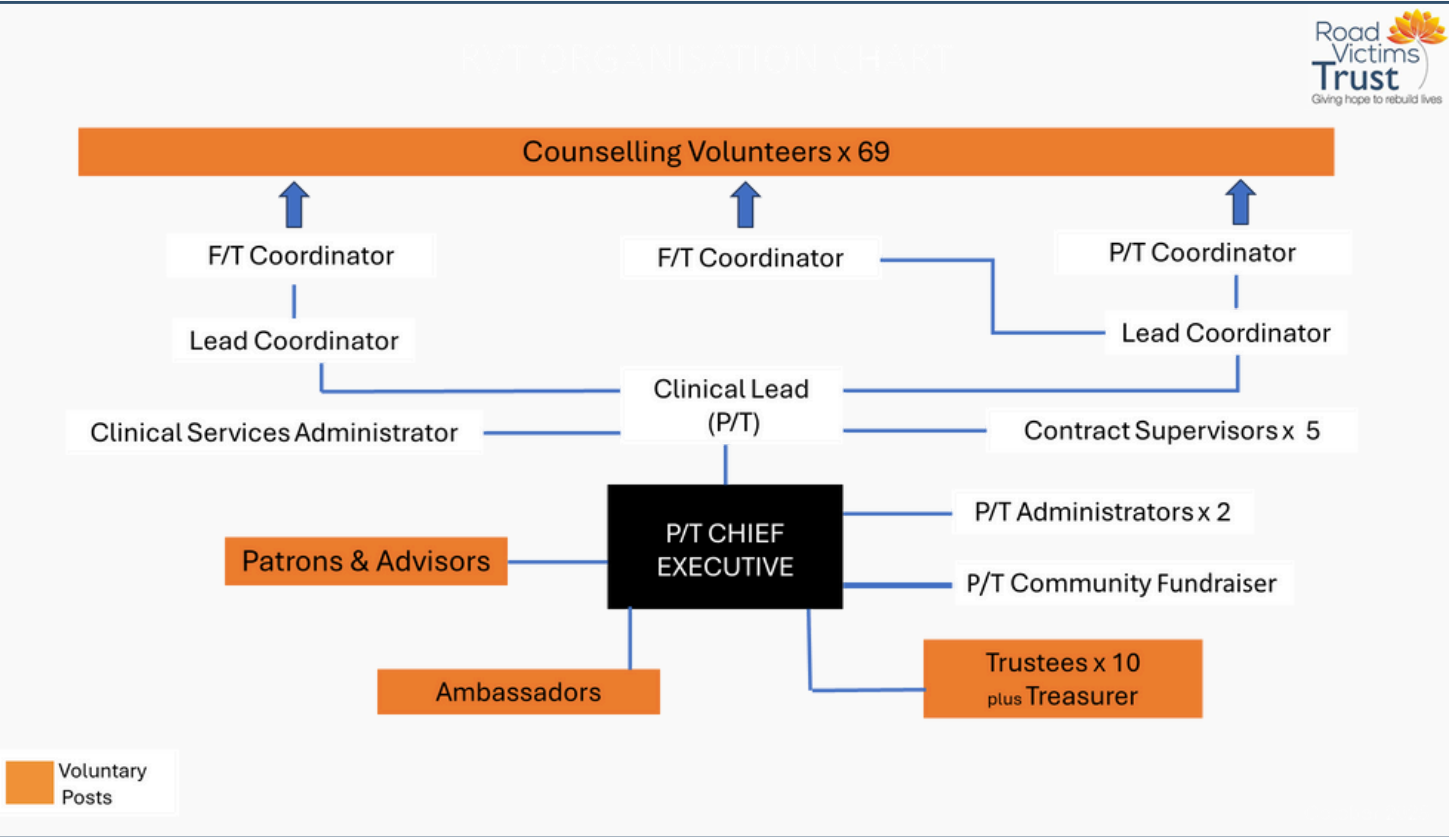
Funding

Historically, the RVT was almost entirely financed by charitable donations and grant making trusts, supplemented with occasional Government grants. Since 2014 we have forged close links with the Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. These links have been further developed with the signing of formal Service Level and Information Sharing Agreements, and associated funding commitments. This funding now underpins our operational activity.

The funding position of the RVT, in common with many other small charities, remains hugely challenging, with costs increasing and greater pressure on public funding. We, therefore, work tirelessly to deliver a financial strategy that enables us to provide the best possible levels of victims care within the constraints of the budget.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The RVT organisational structure is shown in the chart below. This structure facilitates strong governance alongside clinical excellence in the services we provide.



ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

Over the last three-year plan (2021-24), the RVT made progress in many areas. The expansion of services to Norfolk and Suffolk and subsequent withdrawal of funding in both counties has provided us with many lessons relating to operational expansion and sustainability in future. The strategies below reflect these lessons but largely mirror those in the previous plan, as the aims were intended to be long-term. One key change is the addition of a prevention strategy to explore how we can use our voice in local communities to help prevent road trauma, alongside our support for those impacted by it.

Governance Strategy

Strategic Aim:

The RVT Trustees to act as a guardian of our vision, values, aims and assets, protecting the probity of the organisation and ensuring the vitality and long-term wellbeing of RVT.

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Ensure the legal responsibilities of the constitution are robustly upheld and the constitution is regularly reviewed
- Ensure the financial responsibilities, including periodic audits of accounts are rigorously followed
- Strive to maintain an appropriate skill and experience base of Trustees, including an annual skills audit
- Conduct an annual organisational risk assessment including specific Health and Safety issues

Financial Strategy

Strategic Aims:

1. To diversify funding sources to support the long-term future of the RVT
2. To make best use of our financial resources in order to develop RVT services

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Explore all ethical funding sources
- Ensure that any extension of services (either geographical or type) takes place only when adequate funding is in place for the service to be sustainable
- Provide accurate, timely and understandable financial performance information to enable us to make sound organisational decisions
- Develop a methodology for costing and charging all our activities to enable us to work to robust financial performance indicators
- Maintain and operate accounting systems which meet our immediate and long-term needs
- Ensure development and delivery of prevention activities has suitable, sustainable funding

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

Research and Knowledge Management Strategy

Strategic Aim:

To ensure our services and associated activities are grounded in the best available evidence to support the needs of victims and families affected by serious road traffic collisions.

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Research, collate and analyse data obtained from both our internal records and information supplied by key agencies
- Provide objective valid information to enable a considered, focussed and flexible response to the needs of victims and families affected by serious road collisions
- Actively engage with researchers and/or research organisations to further our understanding of what best-practice looks like – working in partnership with others to make effective use of research funding and resources
- Develop inter-organisation links to other agencies or organisations to share best practice and improve the quality of service provided by all
- Introduce a central resource of information to support our staff and volunteers in meeting the needs of victims and families affected by serious road collisions
- Work with other organisations and agencies to improve the understanding of the needs of victims and families affected by serious road traffic collisions

Business Development Strategy

Strategic Aim:

1. To develop the overall service provision of the RVT and increase national awareness of the need for such vital services.
2. To work with other agencies and organisations to enhance the quality and cost-effectiveness of the service provided.
3. To develop a capability to support prevention activities

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Continue to develop and/or improve internal and external communication processes and networks to facilitate service development
- Identify how digital marketing can be used to elevate the profile of the RVT
- Identify opportunities for service expansion through evidence-based research
- Develop and raise our marketing capability including fundraising
- Develop working relationships with agencies and organisations who share the same values and with whom we could share services
- Maintain a risk register and conduct annual reviews
- Manage both internal and external relationships during the transition to any additional or increased service provision

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGIES

Information Systems Strategy

Strategic Aim:

To ensure the appropriate level of investment is made in information systems to achieve both our desired strategic outcomes and operational focus.

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Ensure that the technology infrastructure supports operational and organisational development aims
- Ensure that all information systems developments are fully researched specifically in terms of cost/benefit analysis
- Identify innovative information systems projects that deliver tangible organisational benefits
- Maximise the use of information systems across all stakeholders, not just case management

Prevention Strategy

Strategic Aim:

To use our voice within communities to promote, support and enhance prevention activities being delivered by our partners, and other organisations.

Activities:

Within this strategy we will:

- Provide our expertise on the victims' perspective into the development of prevention activities by our partners.
- Promote the importance of evidence-based prevention interventions and ensure we only support those where this is the case.
- Develop a capability, potentially through a pool of community volunteers, to promote and support road safety activities in their local community.
- Build community interest in and support for road safety activities, including the work of the RVT

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

To monitor progress on the activities within our strategies we have set a series of performance indicators. This section sets out the high-level key performance indicators (KPIs) for the next three years. The Trustees will approve the annual priorities for the Trust and monitor performance against them at each Trustee meeting.

Service delivery will be monitored by the Chief Executive on a monthly basis and by the Trustees at each meeting.

The Chief Executive and Clinical Service Lead will periodically review and evaluate the performance of the service provision.

The reports on such performance will be presented to the Board of Trustees.

KPIs

At a high-level, performance will be monitored against the following:

Reach / Demand / Access

- Number of referrals received (fatal & life-changing collisions)
- Number of individual clients (people) supported
- Waiting time from referral to first contact or first counselling session

Service Delivery

- Total counselling hours delivered (by county)
- Clinical supervision hours delivered to counselling volunteers / staff members

Quality / Effectiveness

- Client satisfaction / feedback scores (e.g. via post-support surveys)
- Improvement in wellbeing / trauma symptoms (pre-/post assessments) [Core 10]
- Incidents of safeguarding or complaint cases - again, this demonstrates the social value that RVT adds by managing and referring safeguarding concerns to statutory agencies

Volunteer & Staff Capacity

- Number of active counsellors (volunteers) engaged
- Attendance / participation rate in training and supervision
- Ratio of staff to volunteers (or caseload per staff member)

Sustainability / Funding / Efficiency

- Income (total, by source: grants, donation, corporate, OPCC)
- Cost per counselling hour delivered (overheads + direct costs)
- Fundraising return on investment (funds raised per £ spent)