

STRATEGIC PLAN 16–21

18 REFRESH

This short refresh of the 2016–21 Strategic Plan is not meant to do or be anything other than a re-statement of our strategic, cultural and operational priorities. It does this drawing actively from our experience over the two years since the original plan was published, which should ideally be read before this document.

Insofar as this is a ‘business plan’, the intention here is simply to articulate our emerging landscape and the next steps we will take into it. There is a point on the horizon toward which we are heading – described more fully later – but this refresh isn’t meant to be a roadmap describing the quickest route to it. By pointing to the horizon but focussing on the ground beneath our feet I hope this refreshed ‘plan’ offers a renewed sense of shared purpose.

SN.

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OTR

THE POINT ON THE HORIZON: OTR AS SOCIAL MOVEMENT

The last few years here have undone the idea that the most effective way to realise our mission (and be done with the need for an OTR at all) is by supplying an ever-expanding volume of one-to-one support.

Despite very substantial growth to our services, demand has continuously outpaced supply. More and more young people want support of some kind. The most important question we can ask ourselves is not how do we meet that need, but why does it exist at all?

The public health crisis and moral panic that has gripped the world of youth mental health in recent years raises important questions about the appropriateness of models of care grounded in individualised, transactional designs.

Public health crises require a public health response that engages with the aetiology (origins) of the issue. Unless you believe the current wave of mental ill health among the young is solely a function of biochemistry, this means a programme of prevention situated upstream of 'treatment', in the social, cultural and economic structures of everyday life.

So what do we mean or gain by reframing OTR as a social movement rather than as a 'provider of services'. In one way the language of a movement describes the character of much of our work over the last five years anyway, but in another it does articulate something new; an explicit emphasis on prevention that is more participatory and politicised than before.

A health social movement is a persevering people-powered effort to promote or resist change in the experience of health or the systems that shape it (Nesta, 2016).

So, how do social movements impact on health and social care...

- Bring about change in the experience and delivery of health care.
- Improve people's experience of disease, disability, or illness.
- Promote healthy lifestyles.
- Address socioeconomic and political determinants of health.
- Democratise the production and dissemination of knowledge.
- Change cultural and societal norms.
- Propose new health innovation and policymaking processes.

Social movements are by nature (because they are highly participatory) porous at their edges, less controlled and controllable. Their form presents a serious challenge to the way we think about the distribution of power and authority in OTR, and the way decisions are made, income is raised, governance framed, and our communications designed.

It may be that in the end we are not really a movement in the pure sense, but occupy instead some undefined space between an organisation and a movement, with characteristics of both. Whether that matters or not is much less important than what we learn along the way, from running towards this point on the horizon. It's that learning - in every day practice - which is more real and relevant and which constitutes the ground beneath our feet, and of course, this strategic plan.

OTR

PEOPLE, CULTURE + ORGANISATION

In 2016 we said we would...

Become the best employer and placement provider around, with a resilient team of staff and volunteers well looked after and invested in by the organisation.

Be an organisation that accepts and is comfortable with uncertainty, complexity and change.

Cultivate a working culture grounded in principles of self-management, evolutionary purpose, wholeness and participation.

Invest progressively in business and back-office functions.

Bring more young people into the workforce in both paid and voluntary roles.

Introduce a pay ratio of 3:1

Develop and expand our internal programme of work and activities promoting staff and volunteer wellbeing.

By 2018 we have...

Developed and grown our placement offer to social work students, and introduced new placement opportunities for mental health nursing and occupational health students.

Run two positively evaluated annual Development Days for the organisation and annual staff and volunteer survey.

Invested in the training and development of the new management team, including in-house learning set's in leadership development where managers can develop their skills and quality. Senior leadership have engaged in high-level training from the King's Fund.

Brought 25 young people aged 16-25 into the OTR workforce in both paid and voluntary roles, creating pathways to training and employment through the organisation.

Introduced a rolling programme of internal training, and allied wellbeing related activities and terms of service including staff yoga, unlimited annual leave, improved 5 week paternity, maternity, adoption leave and pay, a flexible working policy.

Recruited to new back office posts in finance, HR, data and evaluation, facilities, administrative support and graphic design.

Going forwards we will...

- Continue to re-distribute power and authority (including decision making) to an increasingly de-centralised network of self-managed projects and teams.
- Continue to bring more young people into the workforce to provide a platform for voice, the co-design and delivery of resources, interventions, and as a platform for co-produced innovation.
- In collaboration with a university, become a specialist training provider of counsellors / therapeutic practitioners working with young people (rather than just a placement provider).
- Appoint a Director of Resources to oversee the business side of OTR.
- Continue to develop an organising culture characterised by psychological safety (the freedom to fail), personal accountability, asset based thinking and enterprise.

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

In 2016 we said we would...

Move beyond an emphasis on on-to-one support and find ways to deliver more community and peer based mental health support for young people.

Turn our working culture around and become more 'outward looking' - towards other services and options when supporting individual young people and developing new services.

Develop a focus on prevention/self-help and mental health promotion that is highly participatory and involves young people in design and delivery.

We will re-design the way we do outreach to integrate and embed ourselves more fully with schools and other youth and health settings in different neighbourhoods.

We will re-position our organisational relationship to young people by giving them greater access and control of the information/data we hold about them, and by engaging and communicating differently around our services and their health.

Evolve our front-end model to behave more like a 'health club', with the idea of membership superseding that of referral.

Evolve our back-end model to grow more group and psychosocial projects grounded in community development / community psychology.

By 2018 we have...

Scaled up our preventative work significantly. (The Resilience Lab has worked with 6,754 young people since 2016).

Developed and successfully scaled a new workforce (Wellbeing Practitioners) for outreach into schools and other community settings in partnership with Exeter University.

Redeveloped our website to support direct sign-up/registration to projects and support.

Introduced a new Engagement Team to encourage membership and facilitate access to OTR's projects in a preventative and outreach way. The team spoke to circa 10,000 young people in 2017.

Recruited and trained 36 young Peer Navigators as part of our new Engagement Team.

Introduced a new social work offer that holds a wide range of psychosocial wellbeing related projects and collaborations, including Inspiration Works and the Natural Health Service.

Introduced a new offer to parents/carers; a monthly drop-in run by trained parents/carers offering support and advice on youth mental health.

Joined NHS CAMHS intake meetings to improve systemic pathways for young people through, to and from OTR, improving our working relationship with CAMHS.

Going forwards we will...

- Grow our impact for inclusion by achieving a demographic reach for young men of 50% and BAME young people 30% across our services and membership.
- Continue to develop and grow our wellbeing offer, including body-positivity and self-esteem workshops/groups.
- Pilot a primary school age transitions service.
- Grow our Membership Team and the number of Hubs we run each week.
- Monitor and develop our website to include membership features such as a login and members area, digital backpack for client notes, and peer forums.
- Work more collaboratively with and through others to share knowledge and insight and to grow a distributed network of agencies and actors on the same agenda for change.
- Be constructively disruptive in the mental health system through increased participation in policy forums, research and events.

ESTATES

In 2016 we said we would...

Find new premises in both Bristol and South Gloucestershire that bring projects and staff together and supports our work better.

Invest in developing online services and technology to support flexible and mobile working practices.

By 2018 we have...

Secured new larger central premises in Old Market, Bristol, and at the Armadillo Cafe in Yate, South Gloucestershire, while retaining St Michaels Hill and Perry Road. We achieved this at a saving of £15k a year on 2015.

Invested £70k in IT infrastructure and £70k in licensing IAPTus as a cloud based case management platform.

Appointed a Facilities & Resources Manager to co-ordinate this infrastructure.

Going forwards we will...

- Grow a designated strategic reserve ready for any opportunity to purchase the leased premises in Old Market. This includes scoping the possibility of leveraging our St Michaels Hill site.
- Use our premises to generate income and provide a focus for community meetings, events, collaborations.
- Scope the potential to improve the accessibility of our Old Market premises.

MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS

In 2016 we said we would...

Shift our aesthetic brand from Off the Record (which had become synonymous with counselling to external stakeholders) to OTR.

Clarify our message and communications to key audiences (young people, parents, MH system).

Develop structures to support a substantial increase in user generated content (health promotion resources, blogs, blogs etc.)

Move away from paper based marketing to digital.

By 2018 we have

Recruited an in-house Graphic Designer to oversee a the shift in our brand visually.

Introduced Workplace to support internal communications.

Redeveloped the OTR website as a structure to support user generated content and communications (including a new monthly e-newsletter to support public health messages).

Going forwards we will...

- Further develop our website as a platform for enterprise.
- Reach over 10,000 members annually via our e-newsletter.
- Refine our public health message and ensure it is delivered consistently across platforms, teams and public communications.

FINANCE + RESOURCES

In 2016 we said we would...

Move to a business and operational model that helps us grow but mitigates the potential loss to internal culture and cohesiveness that can come with up-scaling.

Establish a pathfinder project to test OTR's ability to incubate scaled projects and 'spin them out' of OTR as stand alone enterprises.

Invest in robust financial structures, including the creation of a Director of Resources post to oversee this.

Achieve a distribution of income that is balanced and able to demonstrate independence from the state (less than 50% by 2021).

Develop our capacity for enterprise across the organisation, with an explicit goal that 25% of our income comes through this route by 2021.

Grow our cash reserves as a proportion of total expenditure.

Scope our potential to buy a larger or second premises, leveraging resource against our premises on St Michaels Hill (ref our Estates Strategy).

By 2018 we have...

Introduced a new Reserves Policy and monitoring regime, and grew our reserves by £115,543 of surpluses (though this is not the cash position, which fell by £78k due to cashflow pressure created by contract structures and billing arrears).

Restructured our contracts, billing and credit control to improve cashflow.

Appointed a Consultant for Enterprise to establish trading across OTR.

Grown unrestricted income through donations by over 400%.

Established Freedom as a pathfinder project for scaling and constituting as an independent legal entity (a charity or social enterprise).

Secured our core service under a five year (plus a further additional five) commissioned contract with Bristol and South Gloucestershire CCGs.

Going forwards we will...

- De-couple growth from revenue. Instead of adding more professionals to payroll and creating new layers and structures to manage this, we will scale our impact to be inclusive, for quality, and for voice and influence nationally.
- Continue to move resource and focus upstream to wellbeing, health promotion and prevention. This will mean difficult conversations and choices about our priorities.
- Launch a dedicated trading arm / enterprise hub to generate unrestricted income in support of greater financial independence, improved financial planning and the ability to deploy resources in ways that allow us to enact our priorities around prevention.
- Employ a Director of Resources to strengthen our capacity for financial management.
- Prioritise growing our strategic reserve for the purpose of buying a second premises (Old Market).