

SAMARITANS



Appointment of Director of Strategy

Candidate Information

December 2020

Hello from our CEO

Hello and thank you for your interest in this fixed term role of Director of Strategy for Samaritans.

Since joining Samaritans in November 2020, I have been incredibly impressed by the work that our volunteer and staff colleagues achieve together to reduce suicide in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Since launching the world's first listening service of its kind in 1953, Samaritans has now become one of the UK and Ireland's most trusted charities. We have 201 branches and over 20,000 volunteers answering a call for help every six seconds, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Our amazing volunteers are supported by a brilliant team of around 200 paid staff.

This is a critical time in Samaritans' history, as we face an external environment that is increasingly complex and challenging. The COVID-19 pandemic will alter society in ways none of us could have imagined. The political situation remains uncertain with the terms of the UK's departure from the EU yet to be finalised and important issues such as inclusion and diversity rightly continuing to be prominent. Against this backdrop, we know our work is needed now more than ever. We are also very fortunate as a charity to be in a position of good financial health. Our work now is to ensure that we remain in this position, and that we can continue to be relevant and to create impact for the people we support in the future.

Our 2015-20221 strategy will be coming to an end next year, and whilst we have made huge progress over recent years, we know there is more that we can do together in support of our vision to reduce suicide. It is imperative that we have the capacity and capability in place to design, develop and implement a strategy that will deliver all we need and want it to in future years.

To support us in our next steps, we are now recruiting a Director of Strategy on a 12-month fixed-term employment contract to work alongside myself and the Senior Leadership Group to develop our future strategy. This role offers a brilliant opportunity to apply your skills in strategy development and in leading change to make a difference to our incredible cause. You will work alongside a highly talented leadership team and board of trustees, and in partnership with a community of volunteers and staff who are all hugely committed to achieving our vision.

To be successful in this role, you will bring experience of developing and implementing organisational wide strategy and strategic change within complex organisations. You will also have the ability to think widely and to identify and implement opportunities to innovate in what we do and how we do it. You will drive a continuous improvement culture through your personal leadership and approach. To complement your professional and technical expertise, you will bring a high degree of emotional intelligence and the ability to engage a broad range of stakeholders, inspiring engagement and buy in to the development of our strategy.

I hope that you will be excited by this opportunity to shape the future of Samaritans and I look forward to receiving your application.

Warm wishes,



Julie Bentley
Chief Executive Officer

Why what we do matters

Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy. At Samaritans, our vision is that fewer people die by suicide and we work tirelessly to reach more people and to make suicide prevention a priority.



About us

At Samaritans, our vision is that fewer people die by suicide. We operate a confidential listening service, responding to a call for help every six seconds. We are available to people who need emotional support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, through 201 branches across England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and The Republic of Ireland. We also support those who need us most via email, webchat, letter, face to face and through our Welsh language service.

We are an organisation with over 20,000 registered volunteers including our key operational leadership roles of 201 Branch Directors, 14 Regional Directors and our Board of Trustees. Of our 20,000 volunteers over 1,200 are trained prison listeners, providing peer support in prisons across the UK. Our volunteer structure works alongside 200 staff, headed by our CEO and Executive Leadership Team (ELT), and responsible for strategic and operational delivery aligned to our purpose.

Samaritans is also an important and influential voice across the UK and Ireland on issues relating to suicide prevention. This is achieved through our proactive and far-reaching research, campaigns, and policy agenda.

We build alliances and meaningful partnerships across society to support our vision that fewer people die by suicide. These partnerships enable us to respond when and where people need us the most.

A few key examples of such partnerships follow:

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked with NHS England to develop and launch a new and dedicated support line for NHS and care workers.
- We are part of a joint initiative with other leading charities in the mental health sector –Our Frontline – offering a wide range of support for health, care, emergency and key workers.
- We have been successful in securing a five-year strategic partnership with Network Rail, building on a prior 10-year partnership, and working together to reduce suicide on the railways

- We actively participate in national strategy and advisory groups across the UK nations and in the Republic of Ireland. and have a leading role in the National Suicide Prevention Alliance (NSPA) in England, with over 500 members working together to reduce suicide.
- We became the host organisation for the Support After Suicide Partnership this year, which is focused on suicide bereavement support services across the country.

We pride ourselves on our strong culture of innovation at Samaritans and recognise the importance of developing new services to support how we can best respond to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Some key examples of this include the following:

- We launched a new self-help tool offering online resources for people who are struggling to cope in 2020.
- Over the coming months, we will continue to implement a new online chat service channel for our callers, which will involve the recruitment of around 6,000 new volunteers to support the expected demand.
- We pride ourselves on our creative and engaging fundraising campaigns such as Samarathon, which encourages members of the public to run, jog or walk 26.2 miles whenever and wherever they like during the month of July.
- We encourage dialogue regarding suicide, which can often feel a sensitive or stigmatised topic. For example, our award-winning awareness and behaviour change campaign, Small Talk Saves Lives, aims to help reduce suicide on the railways by encouraging members of the public to strike up a conversation if they see someone who they think may need help.



“Samaritans made me feel like I had a chance at life.”

Our current strategy

We are approaching the end of Samaritans’ 2015 – 2021 Strategy: Working together to reduce suicide. Due to the pandemic we are extending this by a further 12 months to “bridge” to our new strategy. We are in a critical period for the charity, as we aim to complete the delivery of our current strategy, while at the same time beginning to turn our attention towards the future and how our strategic priorities will need to adapt and change.



Our 2015-21 strategy was developed to focus on four priority areas:

Service: We will improve the quality and consistency of our service

Access: We will improve access to Samaritans’ services

Influence: We will have stronger and more effective external influence and connections with partners

Evidence: We will improve collection and application of evidence.

To deliver the above priorities, we have been paying particular attention to three step change areas we identified back in 2015:

- our volunteering capacity and capability
- our learning and development resources and,
- how we use digital technology to increase access to our services.

To support transformation and to successfully deliver our strategy, we launched a programme of work called “There for Everyone”. This extensive change programme encompassed everything from how we recruit, train and develop volunteers to the service channels we offer and the technology in our branches. The programme is now in its final deployment phase and will be completed early in 2021, then focusing on embedding the required change across our network.

Underpinning our work are the vital foundations of our people, our brand and the income we need to raise to be sustainable. As we conclude our current strategy period, we are confident that we are on track to deliver our plan and that we have made important strides toward our vision that fewer people die by suicide.

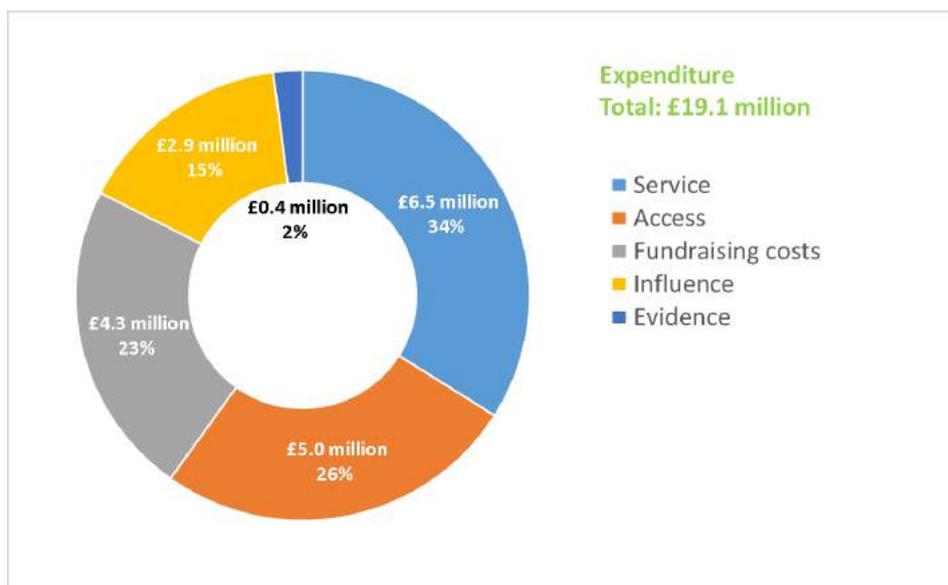
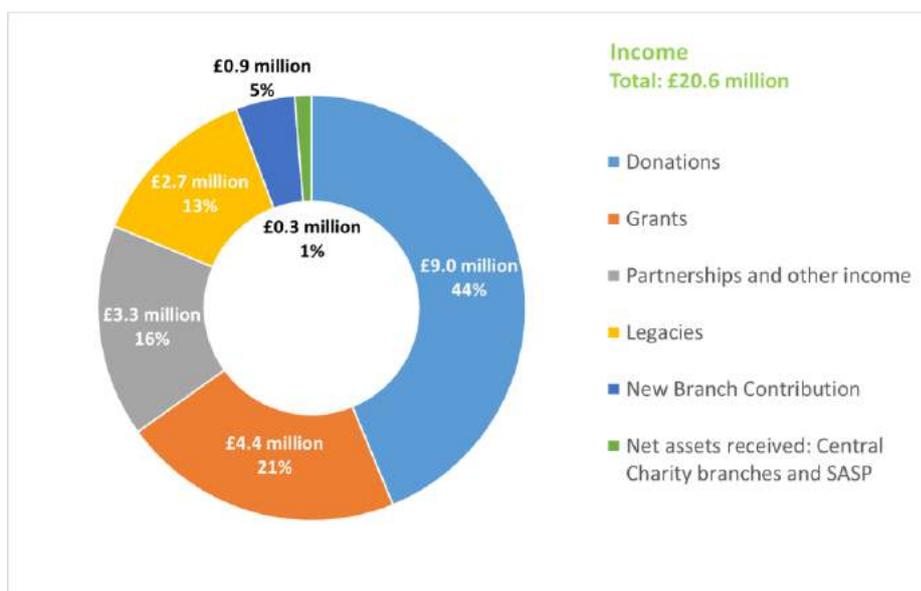
The role of Director of Strategy will be pivotal to shaping the conversation, process and interventions that will shape our future strategy. This new strategy will build upon the many achievements that Samaritans has delivered through its 2015-21 strategy, whilst responding to the current challenges and external factors that

inform our work. Over the past year, we have been building an evidence base to inform our future strategy: an important first priority for the incoming Director is to understand that evidence base to help inform the next steps and programme of work.

Finances

Samaritans benefits from over £75m pro-bono hours from our 20,000+ volunteers. We also have numerous gift-in-kind relationships valued at over £16m, particularly marketing partnerships to raise awareness about our services.

Our annual income and expenditure are depicted below, from our 2019/20 annual report. At end March 2020, our reserves were 7.7 months of expenditure and we have investments and property that add to our assurance of sustainability. We have a strong finance team and Honorary Treasurer to ensure that our plans to grow and innovate are formed from a position of financial strength and with the support of sound financial planning.



At present we do not realise the full potential of our known and trusted brand identity. We have developed an income strategy, and it is our intention to invest in our fundraising efforts and to grow and diversify our

income streams. The purpose of our growth is to achieve more to reduce deaths by suicide; to be there for even more people when they need us most. We want to increase the accessibility and impact of our current services whilst innovating new approaches to engage underserved generations and demographics.

Like most charity sector organisations, we have been concerned about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon our income and overall financial position. We are confident, at this stage, that we will emerge from the crisis in robust shape. We have healthy existing reserves, combined with a highly productive Emergency Appeal, a successful bid for government funding and the development of new income streams.



Director of Strategy job specification

Reports into: CEO

Direct reports: Head of Diversity & Inclusion

Purpose of the role

The purpose of this role is to lead on the formulation of our future strategy and plans at Samaritans. Working in collaboration with the CEO and senior leadership group, and ensuring broad engagement across our internal and external stakeholders, especially our network of volunteers

Developing plans to deliver our future strategy

- Responsible for working with stakeholders to identify strategic themes, and work with key stakeholders from across the organisation to define the outcomes and activities to achieve change within these themes.
- Formulate a programme approach to the delivery of our strategy, seeking to develop the programme management skills and capabilities of our staff leaders and senior volunteers.
- Responsible for delivering a clear and robust plan for the overall timeline, outcomes and key milestones within our strategy, and a programme or project structure that supports cross-organisational collaboration to achieve this
- Accountable for producing and delivering an agreed plan and budget for strategy development and planning.

Leading strategic change and programmes of activity

- Develop an approach to strategy implementation that will support and embed cultural change, building on previous work and partnering with internal stakeholders and external organisations to achieve this
- Responsible for seeking opportunities to innovate or adapt how we approach change across Samaritans
- Working alongside other colleagues to develop the organisation's capacity for innovation, ensuring it sustains the necessary pace, agility and focus to influence positive and lasting change according to short, medium- and long-term priorities
- Oversees the development of a robust and sustainable approach to Inclusion & Diversity, supporting the Head of Inclusion & Diversity in their activities and championing this work internally and externally

Organisational leadership and line management responsibility

- Responsibility for the Head of Diversity & Inclusion, ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is built into the fabric of our next strategy
- Leading through connecting and engaging with a wide range of internal stakeholders, bringing together working groups of colleagues to support strategy development.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of Samaritans' work, and through the specific activities and deliverables required of your role
- Managing the work of external consultants which may be commissioned to support the strategy development process

Forming an evidence-based strategy: analysis and engagement

- Lead on how the organisation defines its strategic priorities
 - Harness data and evidence to develop a clear, evidence-based approach to defining our strategic priorities and activities
 - Implement mechanisms to use insights from stakeholders, data analysis and insights from across the organisation to develop strategy and plans
 - Formation of a robust stakeholder engagement plan that ensures views from across the organisation are heard in the formation of our future strategy and, vitally, that the voice of the people we support forms an important part of this. It would be expected that external partners from all sectors would be involved in this work

- Form and implement an organisation-wide approach to engage people in our strategy and plans
- Lead on developing the strategic measures of success of our future strategy
 - Review our approach to data as an organisation, building approaches and interventions that will make evidence-based planning part of the way we work
- Lead on how we articulate a vision and direction for change for our future strategy
 - Draw on the activities above to articulate a clear common purpose across our volunteer and staff network. This will be an extensive engagement exercise, and the role will have responsibility for working in partnership with colleagues to shaping and deliver the engagement plans

External representation

- Seek to build and extend our networks in strategy development and planning as an organisation, aiming to learn from others and to share our experiences to benefit other organisations

Person specification

The Director of Strategy will ideally have a successful and demonstrable track record in the following areas:

Professional knowledge and skills

- Senior leadership experience in a complex and diverse organisation; ability to motivate and drive an organisation of scale to deliver outcomes
- Senior level experience leading on organisation-wide strategy design, development and implementation, with a preference for having developed a coherent and compelling national strategy
- Proven track record of conceiving of and delivering strategy solutions based on evidence and analysis
- Experience in leading organisational transformational change including maximising the opportunities of digital and technology
- Proven experience of insuring financial sustainability is built into organisational strategy
- Extensive experience of managing a wide range of stakeholders, including at board level, internal and external to the organisation including a volunteer network
- Experience and understanding of the voluntary sector and the challenges and opportunities for developing new strategy and plans within this context
- Experience of supporting and/or leading inclusion and diversity strategy and plans

Key qualities and personal attributes

- Understanding and strong commitment to the ethos and shared values of Samaritans
- Demonstrable active commitment to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion in organisations
- Excellent people management and leadership skills, demonstrated through an ability to establish an open, inclusive culture where diversity is encouraged, and people feel empowered and valued for who they are
- Collaborative and non-hierarchical in style; seeking to build trust and strong engagement with others
- Demonstrates pragmatism and gravitas; culturally sensitive and respectful
- Sensitive communication and influencing skills, with the flexibility and credibility to engage a range of internal and external stakeholders
- Comfortable with working with ambiguity, and working in a complex governance environment
- Ability to build strong rapport and to collaborate with senior volunteers in a federated charity structure

Terms of appointment

- The role is offered on a fixed-term basis for a period of 12 months (with potential for extension).
- The salary range for this appointment is £85,000-£90,000 per annum.
- The Director of Strategy will need to attend governance meetings outside office hours and at weekends on a fairly regular basis. Time off in lieu is provided for attending meetings at weekends.
- Our Samaritans Central Office is located in Ewell, Surrey, just over 30 minutes from Waterloo Station, London. We also have office premises available in London. But Samaritans is an organisation that embraces flexible working, supporting our staff to work when they want, where they want, provided they can achieve their work outcomes. Currently, during Covid, the vast majority of our staff are working remotely, which we anticipate will continue for the foreseeable future.

How to apply

- Applications should be made via our Samaritans website and should include a full CV of no more than three pages, and a covering letter of no more than two pages. Please include an outline of how your skills and experience meet the job and person specification above.
- The deadline for applications is 5pm Thursday 14th January 2021.
- Further information on the recruitment process will follow at the longlisting stage and is likely to follow a two-stage assessment process.

Samaritans recognises the enormous benefits and the social justice imperatives of ensuring diversity at every level of our organisation. We actively and warmly encourage applications from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to support candidates throughout our recruitment process. We are flexible in how we receive information and if you would like to apply via a different format, please let us know by emailing recruitment@samaritans.org.

