



Nightline Association Strategy 2022+

Supporting, Promoting and
Developing Nightlines

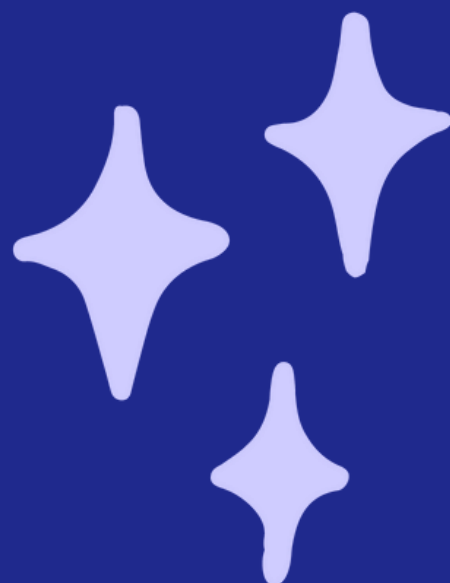


nightlineassociation
SUPPORTING, PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING NIGHTLINES



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✦ About the Strategy

This document explains the what and the why of our purpose. It expands into how we aspire to deliver against that purpose and finally contains our plans for how to deliver it.

As a living document, it will be updated as we feel it is necessary.

Our organisation and its strategy is open to feedback and critique; in fact, we know we'll never achieve our charitable purpose without it! We've done our best to balance this document with our main aim and knowledge of how we might achieve those aims.

Get in touch with any feedback or questions. We'd love to hear from you!

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Background

The Nightline Association (NLA) has existed formally as a charity since 2006. Still, our roots as 'National Nightline' date back to the 1970s and have had much the same purpose since its founding. Our vision and mission haven't fundamentally changed as part of this work, although we have made minor modernisations where appropriate. Our values and what we do are evolving as we seek to meet the emerging needs of the Nightlines (NL) we serve.




This section explains why we're here, with the remainder of the document explaining our ambitions and execution plan for the foreseeable future. It contains the areas that will use most of our focus and time.

We have not set a specific time boundary for this document. Our strategy will be reviewed and updated every six months to ensure it is furthering our charitable purpose and our members' needs and sets a logical direction of travel for this organisation. Our execution plan will contain the intended time horizons. However, as a primarily volunteer-staffed organisation, we expect timelines to fluctuate as capacity and needs change over time and will update this as required.



Vision

For every student to have access to the support offered by Nightline services so that:

-  Every student can talk about their feelings in a safe, non-judgmental environment.
-  Fewer students have their education compromised by emotional difficulties.
-  Fewer students die by suicide.

Mission

To raise the quality, profile, availability, and accessibility of Nightline services so that every student is aware of and has access to confidential emotional peer support and the opportunity to volunteer for a Nightline.



What We Do

We provide over 30 services directly or indirectly to Nightlines and, in some cases, their service users (students). By executing this strategy, we expect to [re]define, mature and [re]launch existing and new services. We may also retire services which are no longer a strategic priority.

We also provide Nightlines with (non-legal) counsel and guidance through sharing packages of policies, processes, procedures and training courses.

Finally, we advocate for the Nightline movement through partnerships and communication with the general public and the private, public and voluntary sectors.

- We provide Services for Nightlines to operate
- We Guide Nightlines during setup, operation & closure
- We Advocate for the Nightline Movement
- We Create Opportunities for development & partnership for Nightlines



Our Values

The guiding principles for which we stand, the ideals we refuse to compromise as we conduct our mission in pursuit of our vision.



Empathy: Listen, learn, and consider the needs of others.



Transparency: Share openly, whenever possible.



Kindness: Treat others with kindness and respect no matter what.



Dependability: Deliver what we say we're going to; when we can't, communicate it.



Inclusiveness: Intentionally remove all systematic sources of bias and welcome all.



Assume good intent: Assume the other person is doing their best for the NLA and NLs.






Our Strategic Priorities

These priorities are distilled from speaking with representatives from across our diverse range of stakeholders, including member Nightlines, our volunteers, staff, funders, and of course, our trustees.

They are wide-ranging and will take significant resources and time to achieve. However we believe that regardless of the size of our ambitions, we will make steady and meaningful progress towards them by writing them down and publishing them for our stakeholders to feedback. Through this, we will be held accountable to our commitments.

Our Ambitions

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Service Provision Excellence (1)

Provide functional, safe, and reliable services to Nightlines that meet, and where possible, exceed, members' needs, and comply with national regulations and industry guidelines.

Why this ambition and what's our challenge?

We have identified that many of our services need to be improved. We have challenges with capacity, functionality and overall service maturity.

Delivering services to Nightlines is one of our essential purposes; therefore, we must ensure that these services meet specific minimum requirements; if they do not, they should be retired.

Once a service has been assessed as meeting a minimum level of maturity, we need to outline a roadmap for how it matures over time to meet and exceed our stakeholder's expectations. This will take focus, resources and significant investment over time.



How will we achieve this and what might we measure?

- Formally define our services and outline existing maturity levels for each.
- Continually gather feedback from Nightlines to ensure services are built to meet (and exceed where possible) their needs.
- Design and [re]build services to meet minimum security and reliability requirements without sacrificing needed functionality.
- Deliver services which meet current regulations, including Data Protection, Safeguarding and known future legislative requirements.
- Pursue partnerships with institutions capable of leading and/or supporting research into areas which impact services users, NLs themselves and the NLA.
- Assess each service 'now' against a standardised maturity score, ensuring it includes functionality, safety and reliability at a minimum.
- Monitor each service over time, ensure maturity scores are updated and take corrective action if necessary.
- Leverage the results of any relevant research to identify gaps and trends. This research will influence our service development.



Organisational Resilience (2)

Improve the charity's resilience by obtaining significant and ongoing funding sources to provide permanent resourcing (staff and/or freelancers) in critical areas for leadership and organisational operations. We should have a solid foundation of volunteers supporting our strategic, operational and project-based ambitions.

Why this ambition and what's our challenge?

We have greatly benefited from permanent staff over the past 18 months across multiple areas, including project management, general operational continuity, and line management. Due to our dependence on fantastic volunteers, we often run into capacity and availability constraints, which place undesirable pressure on other volunteers or cause delays. Permanent staff provide the availability to our internal and external stakeholders, which ensures critical areas are progressed. We have also benefited from the sustained focus on priority areas to ensure progress against our strategic ambitions. Therefore, increasing overall capacity and resilience is critical to support our aims.



How will we achieve this and what might we measure?

- Outline and showcase the organisation's significant impact on its member organisations, secondary beneficiaries and the general public.
- Refine and expand our fundraising capabilities. This may include increasing volunteer numbers, engaging with professional fundraisers, and working with other partners who may support this ambition.
- Establish fundraising opportunities, including restricted and unrestricted financial support.
- NLA volunteers report satisfaction in their roles, feel supported by line managers, and have opportunities for training and development.

Resilience of our organisation's people will be achieved through Foster Belonging (Ambition 4).

Increase Capacity (3)

Increase our overall capacity to become an effective, efficient, and valued organisation.

Why this ambition and what's our challenge?

Increasing our capacity allows us to expand the range of services we offer to Nightlines, ensure the sustainability and continued development of existing services, and expand into new institutions and student bodies that don't have access to a Nightline, thereby maximising the number of students who have access to peer listening support. It is challenging to attract volunteers and staff with less organisational maturity and with reduced capacity to recruit, onboard and manage volunteers and staff.

How will we achieve this and what might we measure?

- Define common ways of working, considering our organisation's digital and remote needs and constraints.
- Improve our recruitment and onboarding processes to ensure longevity and measure our effectiveness via staff and volunteer surveys.
- Implement the necessary changes to our culture, policies, process and procedures to retain volunteers and staff.
- Effectively resource our teams and establish formal project management and oversight to ensure success.



Foster Belonging (4)

Foster a diverse and inclusive culture of amazing people who feel like they belong in order to guarantee the success of our organisation, our people, and our shared ambitions.

Why this ambition and what's our challenge?

Drawing from a diverse range of people ensures access to the most skilled and experienced sources of volunteers and staff, strengthening our ability to deliver our ambitions.

Ensuring the people working with us feel that they belong is morally and ethically right. It ensures that we are doing our best to foster an appropriate culture which appreciates and recognises the value they provide to our organisation.

As a mostly virtual organisation, this will be an ongoing process to first create a set of shared values before reforming our culture to encourage personal behaviours led by these values to everyone's benefit.



How will we achieve this and what might we measure?

- Establish solid foundations for the volunteer journey to instil our shared values and culture from the initial recruitment process to volunteering/working for the NLA.
- Create a proper induction and onboarding experience, provide governance and support to give volunteering a proper framework, and set realistic expectations and objectives.
- Ensuring volunteers can meet regularly with their line managers to have the opportunity to discuss their volunteering experience and development needs where appropriate conducting semi-regular reviews with their line managers to identify goals and objectives for themselves and also for the Association in how we can better support them in their volunteering journey.
- Plan for, design, and deliver local and national conferences for internal and external purposes, including advocacy, engagement, and training.
- We will work with our internal volunteers and staff to understand existing gaps, actively seek critical reflection on our practices and be committed to taking criticism constructively to build a place where we can all belong.
- Ensure that existing and future volunteers and staff live our values in their work and challenge any behaviour that's not in line with our values, directly and through our appropriate policies.
- Investigate running volunteering and staff surveys to periodically assess our culture and the sentiments felt by those who work with us.



Extend Reach (5)

Extend our reach by advocating for the Nightline movement in public, private and third sectors to maximise overall awareness, support, and usage of Nightlines.

Why this ambition and what's our challenge?

Defining and promoting our unique value proposition is paramount to ensuring that our current and future stakeholders understand why we are here and what we do. Being able to reference high-quality research provides an evidence basis for our work; until we can engage in carefully outlined research projects and stake our actions to its findings, we will struggle to extend our reach.

We need to refine a concise value proposition, considering our historical and potential future impact on society, especially concerning service users, NLs and the NLA.


We need to work with researchers, industry professionals and other stakeholders to conduct ongoing research in areas we have committed to addressing as a charity.

Overall, this will result in us being able to demonstrate and report on our impact, extend our reach into more national institutions, and greatly impact students' lives over time.



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Deepen Relationships (6)

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How will we achieve this and what might we measure?

- As covered in Extend Reach (Ambition 5), invest in research to ensure our direction is grounded in the needs of our various stakeholders.
- Understand the unique needs of our member NLs and their key stakeholders. This could involve activities such as stakeholder interviews to understand the challenges faced and whether existing solutions are sufficient.
- Planning, designing, and running events which focus on the engagement of staff, volunteers and our stakeholders to create and strengthen relationships.



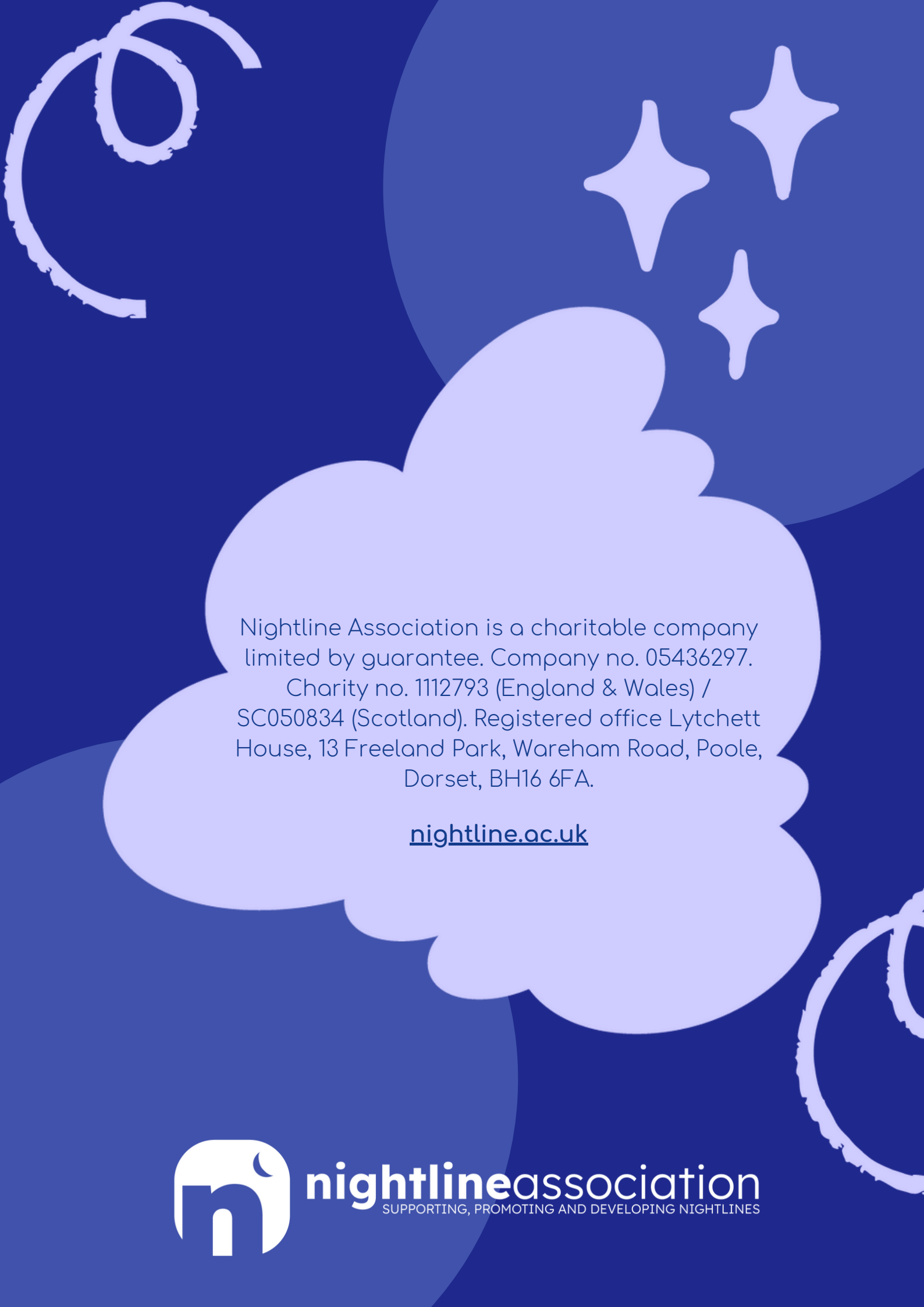
Support our work

The ongoing support of our volunteers and partners allows us to deliver, support, promote and develop Nightline Services through new projects and continued initiatives.

We welcome your involvement in our work and that of Nightline Services around the UK, through partnerships or volunteering. Get in touch with any feedback or questions. We'd love to hear from you!

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Nightline Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee. Company no. 05436297.

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